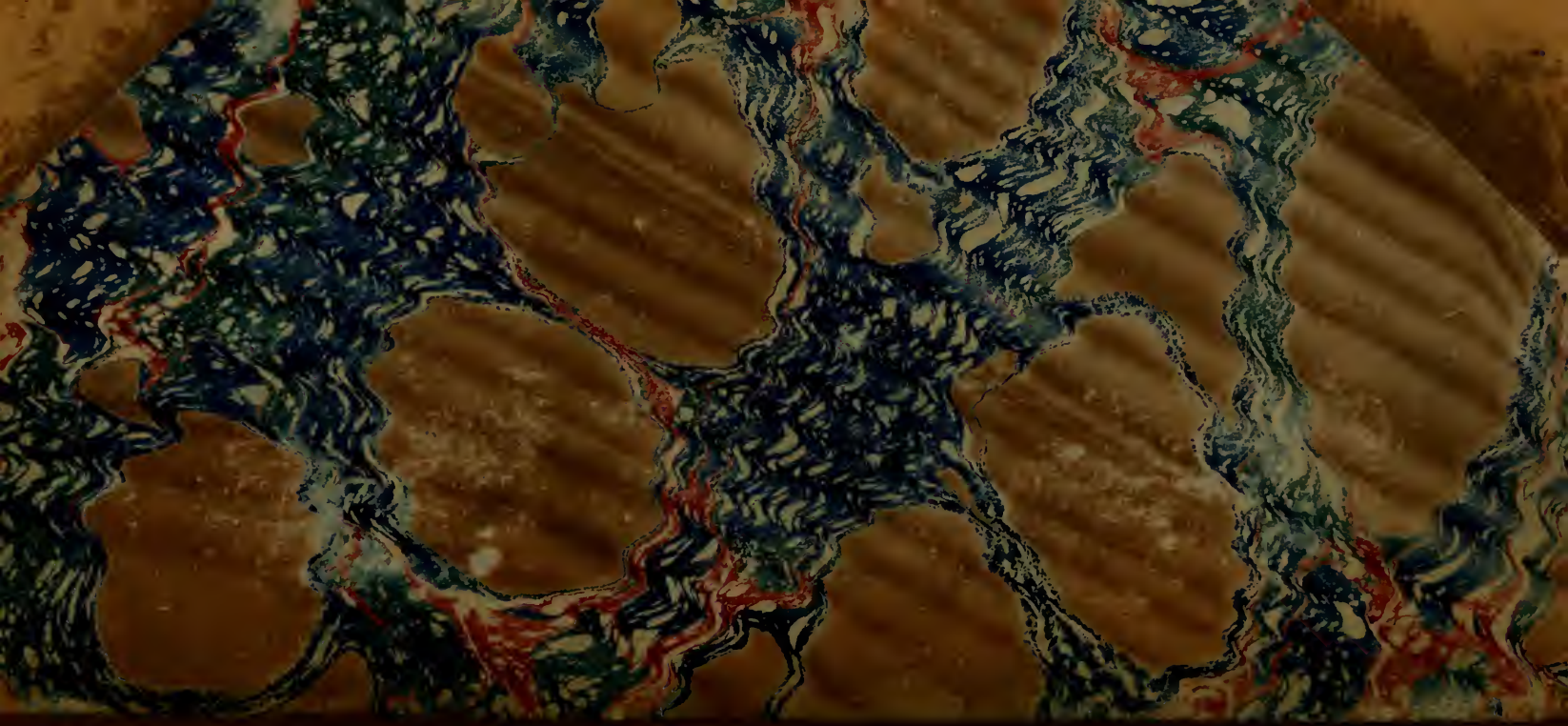

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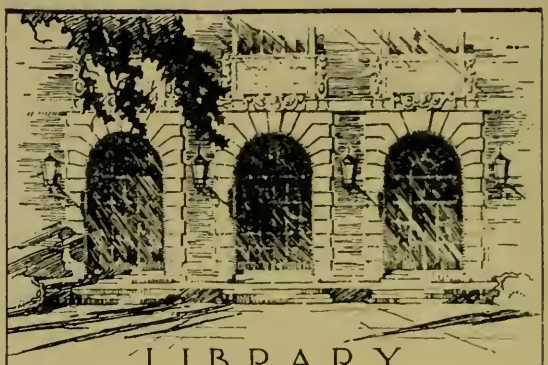

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VILLAGE ANECDOTES;

OR,

THE JOURNAL OF A YEAR,

FROM

SOPHIA TO *EDWARD.*

WITH

ORIGINAL POEMS.

By MRS. LE NOIR.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON,

PRINTED FOR VERNOR AND HOOD, 31, POULTRY,
By A. Wilson, Wild Court, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

1804.

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VILLAGE ANECDOTES.

SOPHIA TO EDWARD.

To Mr. Willars.

Friday, October 31.

HARRIET charged me not to neglect the puppy in her abſence; ſhe has likewiſe left me the care of a pair of young pigeons, which were deſerted by their unnatural parents; theſe I am to feed three times a day; the fear of failing in my taſk, waked me long before my uſual hour. I roſe betimes, and all my buſineſs ended, had ſtill better than an hour upon my hands before I could hope to ſee the family aſſembled

to breakfaſt. I wrapped myſelf up, and in ſpite of a gloomy morning, accompanied only by Sappho, who followed me wonderfully well, ſtrolled to the common. The air was mild and ſerene, and, ſurrounded with ſilence and ſolitude, I had nothing to reſtrain the wanderings of fancy; I compared this ſpacious tract of deſert uncultivated land, with that vaſt tract of ocean of which my Edward is now an inhabitant. Both are wild, dreary, deſolate—pleaſing at firſt, by the idea of unbounded extent, the penſive eye, but ſoon wearying by unvaried ſameneſs. There is, however, neither rocks nor quick ſands, and all is ſecurity and peace. Oh! how willingly would I reſign all proſpect of riches and advancement for a ſheltered cottage, a little larger, and ſomething neater, than one I deſcry yonder, with peace and competence; my Edward and my Harriet for inhabitants, &c.

While here ſecure, yet penſively I ſtray,
O'er the lone common's unfrequented way,
Wild fancy, unconfin'd by time or ſpace,
Changes with magic pencil at the place.
The extenſive waſte becomes an ocean wide,
And broken ridges ſeem to form a tide;
This mount, a rock where fixt in mute amaze,
My roving brain grows giddy as I gaze.
Yon ſcatter'd oaks, now ſtript of all their pride,
Are diſtant ſails, imperfectly deſcried;
Ah where is Edward's?—ſoothing fancy ſay?—
Shew where his veſſel ploughs its vent'rous way;
Love's piercing viſion then will ſee him ſtand,
Seeking Sophia on this point of land,
He ſtrains his eye, and waves his trembling hand:—
Come my love—ye boiſterous billows ſtay,
Breathe ſoft ye winds, and bear him on his way;
Methinks I hear the daſhing of the oar,
And ſee the little ſkiff approach the ſhore,
Lo, when ſhe mounts the ſwelling wave uptoſt,
Then ſudden ſinking, ſeems engulph'd and loſt.
Alas! my Edward, why will reaſon rude,
And ſad reality ſo ſoon obtrude?
Why from a day—dream painting thy return,
Muſt I awake thy abſence ſtill to mourn?

Saturday, November 1.

Sally gave me yeſterday a ſhort hiſtory of the parent ſhe ſo much and ſo deſervedly laments. Her father was gardener at the great houſe, when the family from whom Mr. Attenden inherits, reſided there. Mrs. Otterwit, the dowager, took a fancy to Nanny, that was her name, and engaged her about her perſon. This lady, who ſaw five ſons grow up to man's eſtate, lived to follow four of them to the grave; the only one who ſurvived her died without iſſue, and the eſtate devolved to Mr. Attenden, who is of Yorkſhire, in right of his mother. But to return from my digreſſion, Mrs. Otterwit was a woman of merit and diſcernment, and took ſome pains to cultivate the good qualities ſhe obſerved in her waiting woman; ſhe had her taught to read and write, and inſtructed her carefully in her moral and religious duties, of which

which her own faultleſs conduct furniſhed excellent rules. Nanny proved an apt ſcholar, and though, at the age of twenty-two ſhe loſt her kind tutoreſs, ſhe ever after cheriſhed her memory, and treaſured up her counſels. She was pretty, and her young maſter, who, though he reſembled his mother in perſon, was extremely unlike her in mind, endeavoured to prevail on her to remain with him, by the moſt alluring promiſes. She ſaw his aim, and was inflexible; though ſhe further loſt a ſmall legacy, the bequeſt of her deceaſed miſtreſs, which he had the meanneſs to detain, under pretence that his mother died involved, and had nothing to give. Not having the means of obtaining redreſs, againſt ſo powerful an oppreſſor, ſhe let the matter drop, and engaged herſelf in the ſervice of a maiden lady at M———; where ſhe ſucceeded in conquering a partiality for an unworthy lover, an upper ſervant in the family ſhe juſt quitted, who had forſaken her when diſap-

pointed of the legacy ſhe expected. Nanny's ſecond miſtreſs was the reverſe of the former in every thing; in proportion, as the firſt was liberal, benevolent, conciliating, gentle and conſiderate, the other was narrow-minded, harſh, unfeeling, cenſorious, and capricious. But it was here, in this ſevere ſchool, that as ſhe often told her grand-daughter, ſhe learned the utility of her firſt miſtreſs's inſtructions, and reduced her theory to practice. Indeed, my dear child, ſhe would ſay to Sally, I believe this place did me more good than the firſt; at leaſt nothing could have happened better to cure me of being a little ſpoilt. My firſt miſtreſs uſed to tell me, that the duty of all chriſtians was to be humble; while her kindneſs made me proud. My ſecond humbled me every day and every hour: for ſhe was continually finding ſome fault with me, which I did not at all ſuſpect in myſelf, but which, upon examination, I often diſcovered to be true. My firſt miſtreſs would tell me of

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the advantages as well as of the merit of patience, by the hour; it was her favourite theme. Impatience, my dear Nanny, she would say, aggravates all our sufferings both of mind and body; reflect how much it is your interest to attain to perfection in a virtue which softens every pain, and renders it supportable: while impatience still increases it in your station of life, particularly, where you are so much exposed to suffer from the ill temper and defects of others, patience is absolutely necessary to make life supportable. Poor dear woman! she taught me to value the virtue of patience, but I doubt if ever I had acquired much with her; there never was occasion for any.—My second mistress, without meaning to benefit me, took a more effectual method. She thwarted and contradicted me from morning till night, and, being extremely impatient herself, was so very unhappy, that while she led me to detest her temper, I set about correcting what was defective in my own. And Oh,

my dear child! in all the troubles I have ſince gone through, how uſeful has this happy frame of mind been to me; at preſent, you ſee nothing ruffles me, you take it perhaps for the apathy of age, but it is principle confirmed into habit." Nanny's four miſtreſs died at the end of three years; ſhe left her ten pounds and her clothes; this ſmall fortune procured her a huſband. She married a ſervant of Mr. Figgins's at the mill, and kept a little ſchool. She had ſeveral children, but only two lived; Sally's mother, and a ſon, who went to ſea. Her huſband was ſurly and unaccommodating, oppoſing her in her moſt reaſonable purſuits, and, when he died, ſhe was not releaſed from ſuffering; for the daughter reſembled him ſo much in ſtupidity and ill-humour, that ſhe could not aſſiſt her mother to continue the ſchool, which had been of great help to them, and the poor old woman's eye ſight failing, ſhe was obliged to give it up. Her daughter's huſband

died

died young of a conſumption, another ſore affliction to his mother-in-law, to whom he was dutiful and attentive. Ever ſince, the poor old woman has been ſtruggling with poverty and diſtreſs, without any comfort but reſignation; and her grand-daughter Sally, the only one whoſe happy diſpoſition rewarded her pains, and whom of late ſhe has been deprived of ſeeing. Her patience and cheerfulneſs, however, never forſook her, and ſhe died as ſhe had lived, calm, patient, compoſed, full of religion and hope. Mr. Ewer, who had an account of her laſt moments from her nurſe, was moved to tears, when he related it to us in the evening of yeſterday. He brought the following inſcription, which we ſhall ſubſcribe to have engraved on a wooden monument, to be placed under a ſmall ſhed againſt the church, cloſe under which ſhe is interred.

To the memory
Of Anne Ropon, of this pariſh,
Who ended a life
Of honourable old age,
And virtuous poverty,
October —79,
In the 73d year of her age.

Sunday, Nov. 2.

Mr. Ewer having brought me yeſterday the book he promiſed, I began it in the morning, and I took it up after I had retired to my apartment; it intereſted me, and I read on, unconſcious of the hour. Though prepared for a ſpectre, its appearance rather alarmed me. I had imagined that the female which haunted Oliver of a night was Armofhole, who, under the diſguiſe of Zemni the page, attended him all day. With this prepoſſeſſion, the ghoſt did not fail,

fail to ſhock and ſurpriſe me, and affected my ſpirits ſo much, that I paſt a very uncomfortable night, as I am going to relate to you:—I am lodged at ſome diſtance from the reſt of the family; Harriet's room joins to mine, but you know ſhe is abſent. A maſſy old faſhioned door ſeparates our two rooms, and a long dreary paſſage from the other apartments. Another door on the oppoſite ſide, which is uſually faſtened, leads to a back ſtaircaſe and ſome rooms where the ſervants are lodged. I had read till paſt midnight, and my fire and candle were both very low. I felt cold, and tried ineffectually to ſtir up a cheerful blaze; with as little ſucceſs, I ſtrove againſt the dejection that ſeized upon my ſpirits. Unable to reaſon myſelf out of it, I hurried into bed, and endeavoured to compoſe myſelf to ſleep; it was in vain, at every inſtant I ſtarted at fancied ſounds, and was ſo completely reſtleſs and uneaſy, that I ſhould have riſen again if my light

had not gone out. Thus paſt, as I conjectured, three tedious hours; at length I began to ſlumber, when a violent noiſe, like ſome one ſtumbling againſt my door, rouſed me from my ſhort forgetfulneſs. I liſtened, breathleſs with affright, and imagined, after a ſhort pauſe, that I heard footſteps moving cautiouſly along the paſſage. I thought the paſſage door opened, and was gently cloſed again: I ſtill liſtened, but a dead ſilence prevailed, and I could hear nothing more. Could all this be fancy? if it was, the puppy partook of my vapours, for it raked and ſtarted too. After this, I ſlept no more till day light reſtored me to a little eaſe and compoſure of mind; my ſlumber laſted till Sally came to light my fire. When I went down to breakfaſt, I related my alarm to the family, Mrs. Peterſon anſwered very coolly, that ſhe knew the paſſage was haunted, and only wondered I had never heard any thing before; neither of her girls, ſhe ſaid, would ſleep there

there for the world, and, for her part, ſhe never liked to go into it after dark. "Hark, O my wife," ſaid Mr. Peterſon, "what ſhould my houſe be haunted for? Never mind her, Mrs. Willars, there's no more ſpirits in your ſide of the houſe than the other. Mayhap there may be ſome rats indeed; I am ſure ſome one has been at the malt laſt night; let puſs have the range of the paſſage, and ſhe'll lay the ghoſt I warrant her; or, if ſhe don't, call me, and I'll ſee what my blunderbuſs can do."

I can laugh at my apprehenſions, now they are over, as well as any body. I have, however, examined my neighbourhood with more attention than I had ever thought neceſſary before. The door that leads to the back ſtair-caſe is faſtened on the inſide with two bolts; beyond are rooms, beſides thoſe of the ſervants, uſed as ſtore places for malt, apples, onions, &c. over head is a large garret open on all ſides to the wind, formerly

formerly a gallery, and now uſed only as a drying room; there is only one way to it from the back ſtair-caſe, where the rats may very probably amuſe themſelves; in the paſſage are ſome large old trunks and cheſts, behind which may be holes of communication; but ſtill the noiſe againſt my door and the opening of that of the paſſage remain to be accounted for; however, in my fright I might miſtake the ſound; I'll try to think no more about it; my neighbour returns to-night, and I ſhall have company; ſhe is here. Adieu for the preſent, my firſt love, my Edward!

Monday, Nov. 3.

Harriet returned the gayeſt of the party. "How is this my love," ſaid I? "you are all ſpirits; you have certainly been well amuſed."—"I'm in ſpirits, 'tis true," replied

plied ſhe, " but it is to feel myſelf returned; not that I regret my jaunt; it has anſwered very well. I had not raiſed my expectations to an unreaſonable height, as you know."—" You had then an agreeable dance."—" Yes," ſaid ſhe," " the dance was not crowded, and it really was agreeable; I had for a partner a young man whom I never ſaw before, nor deſire to ſee again, but with whom I was perfectly well ſatisfied. He danced well, was neither ſo over attentive as to be troubleſome, nor ſo careleſs as to be of no uſe; quite the partner for a ball; and Mr. Deacon was not there."---" Were your couſins equally well pleaſed?" ſaid ſhe.---" I doubt not," replied ſhe. " Charlotte danced with Mr. Bertram, which ſhe ſeemed not half to like, and Anne, with Mr. Parkitt, a married man; you know which, ſhe ſays, of all things ſhe hates."—Were not their military beaus there then?"—" O, yes, madam; but there were ſome very fine ladies of

the neighbourhood, and I doubt we were all but *little ruſticks* compared to them. Some of theſe ladies were handſome, and all very ſhewy and elegant. Captain Sifton, who danced with one of them, could not poſſibly ſee us. Once, as he was coming down the dance, he nodded familiarly at my couſin Charlotte, and, ſhe ſays, ſqueezed her hand. I ſaw her colour very high as I ſtood next her, and, for fear of ſome impudence, looked another way, and avoided doing the figure with him. Mr. Bertram ſaid ſomething of his inſolence ſo loud I was afraid he would have heard it, and Charlotte would not dance any more. I believe he did not take the leaſt notice of her afterwards.

A little before ſupper, when we were all aſſembled in the parlour, as uſual, arrived Mr. Thomas. "So you be comed home wenches? well, did you get any body to dance with you?"—"To be ſure they did," anſwered

anfwered his mother; "they danced with their own *natoral* neighbours, as they ought to do."—"They did, did em," faid he." "Oh! that was forced meat, I'll be fworn; What, was there no red coats to be had? ha, they quite turned you off, hey girls? Did'nt em know you went on purpofe after 'em; or that might be the reafon why—we none of us like forward miffes."

Miſs Peterſon, extremely piqued, deſired him to trouble his head with his own buſineſs; and would probably have ſaid much more, but, while ſhe was yet ſpeaking, her father entered with Mr. Bertram. "There, child, is your partner," ſaid he, "comed to ſee how you do after your dance." MiſsPeterſon, a little ſoftened towards him, by her recent mortification, received him with ſmiles of encouragement. The father ſeemed as well pleaſed as the lover; he ordered wine and punch, and at eleven o'clock, when Harriet and I retired, they were

were ſtill in high glee. I did not tell my neighbour of my laſt night's alarm, nor requeſt her company as I had purpoſed to do; I felt much diſpoſed to ſleep, and have well repaired my laſt night's deficiency.

Tuesday, Nov. 4.

Mr. Ewer ſpent the evening of yeſterday with us; he inquired in general how the young ladies had been entertained at the ball? Harriet was the only one who ſeemed diſpoſed to be communicative; ſhe was unuſually ſo; chatted away, deſcribed the company and their dreſſes with great glee, and ſeemed to enjoy the recollection. Mr. Ewer coloured a little, and inquired who had had the happineſs of her hand for the evening? "I do'nt know who he was," ſaid ſhe, "ſome acquaintance of Mr. Parkitt's, though the pleaſanteſt man in the world

world to dance with, never tired, never abſent, nor out of time; minding nothing but the dance, and occupied with his partner only as ſhe was a part of it. I had no occaſion to trouble myſelf about the figure; he always had it in his head; now croſs over, madam, now right hand and left; he knew to an inſtant how long it was allowed me to be ſeated, and when to offer refreſhments, compliments, or aſſiſtance: I believe it is all ſet down in his pocket-book, for I ſaw him have recourſe to it every now and then."

Mr. Ewer, who had been very attentive to this detail, looked a little leſs grave at the concluſion of it. "I ſhould be loth to accuſe you of affectation, Miſs Harriet," ſaid he, "yet ſure no young lady ever fancied her partner without wiſhing to know his name."—"I never had ſuch a wiſh, I aſſure you," ſaid ſhe; "what have I to do with his name?"—"Suppoſe he ſhould

ſhould make you a tender of it, madam," ſaid he, "I cannot be of your opinion that his fair partner engaged him only for the dance; I believe the reverſe to be the truth, and that it was on account of his partner that the dance intereſted him."

Harriet now looked grave in her turn, and anſwered, that to hear any more of him was an honour ſhe expected quite as little as ſhe deſired it. "Do you think," ſaid ſhe, "I cannot tell when a man means to be particular to me?" She bluſhed as theſe words eſcaped her. Mr. Ewer then inquired how I liked my book: this led to a relation of the effect it had taken on my ſpirits, and my conſequent alarm, which I imputed to a diſordered imagination.

Mr. Ewer queſtioned me very particularly relative to the ſituation of my apartment, and Harriet about the noiſe I had heard.

heard. Miſs Peterſon ſaid, that once as ſhe was ſitting at work in my room, ſhe had heard a very odd howling over head; and Miſs Anne was ſure that ſomething had ruſhed by her one evening in the paſſage. Variety of ſtories of hobgoblins were introduced ſucceſſively; the ladies drew their chairs cloſer together, ſome turned red, and ſome pale. "Whence ariſes the notion," ſaid Mr. Ewer, "that a ſpirit may be ſeen and heard, yet not felt? an unembodied ſpirit can no more be perceived by one ſenſe than by another; it is as impoſſible to us to ſee or hear as to feel it; and if you ſuppoſe that it aſſumes a body, it may be felt as well as ſeen."—"The notion, if not philoſophical, is at leaſt very ancient, ſir," ſaid I; "you will recollect that our Saviour, when, after his reſurrection, his apoſtles were afraid, and imagined that they ſaw a ſpirit, deſired them to touch him, to be convinced that he was not one. "A ſpirit has not fleſh and bones as you

ſee

ſee me have."—"You believe in ſpirits then, Mrs. Willars," ſaid Harriet.—"I believe none of the idle ſtories we hear of their appearance, my dear," ſaid I, "but, as a Chriſtian, I believe in a world of ſpirits, and in the ſcripture, which in ſeveral places relates inſtances of their having been permitted to appear viſibly; and what has been may be."—"But how do you account for it;" ſaid ſhe; "for Mr. Ewer's obſervation ſtrikes me as very juſt."—"I cannot account for it, my dear, nor for many other things which doubtleſs exiſt, and are certain. You every day ſee your face in a looking-glaſs, yet the ableſt naturaliſt cannot tell you how that effect is produced."—"How it is produced," ſaid ſhe? "it is produced by my ſtanding before it. I ſee nothing wonderful in that; becauſe you ſee it every day, and do not reflect upon it, Madam," ſaid Mr. Ewer. "When you ſee your ſhadow in the ſun, the reaſon of that is obvious; your body obſtructs the light,

light, and produces the reſemblance in ſhade; but why a clear ſtream, or a glaſs, ſhould reflect ſo exactly the image before it, no perſon can exactly explain."

When we retired for the night, Harriet accompanied me to my apartment; ſhe ſeemed much inclined to chat, and not at all diſpoſed to go to her own; I invited her to a ſhare of my bed, but ſhe refuſed, and ſnatching up the puppy, ran haſtily to her own, not forgetting to ſecure the door. I knew not how long I had been aſleep, when I was ſuddenly awaked by a tapping againſt the wall, which at firſt alarmed me a good deal; but I ſoon diſcovered from where it proceeded, and recognized Harriet's voice through all the tremour of it. I had luckily burnt a light, and, catching a night-gown round me, I went to her aſſiſtance;—I called ſeveral times before ſhe could be convinced it was me; ſhe then

jumped out of bed, and removed the barricades she had placed before the door, besides locking it. She trembled exceedingly, and was all over in a cold dew. To my questions of what had thus alarmed her, she answered, that she had heard the apparition.—"Indeed it is no fancy, Mrs. Willars," said she; "I heard it open the first door of the passage, creep gently along, and unbolt the further door; I am sure I heard it." "Well," said I, "let me go and call your uncle, and see if the doors are open; a ghost can pop through a key-hole; it has no occasion to unbolt doors." This she positively refused, intreating me not to leave her; I then fastened the doors, and partook her bed; it was some time before either of us could sleep; however we heard nothing more, and I am inclined to think it was only a dream; for Sally assures me she found all the doors fast this morning. Harriet looks very pale, and the story of

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the ghoſt gains great credit in ſpite of all my argument againſt it. Her tent-bed is moving into my room, for ſhe has not the courage to venture another night alone.

Mr. Bertram dines here to-day; his affairs ſeem in a proſperous way. I believe this is an extraordinary ghoſt, and that it portends a wedding.

Wednesday, Nov. 5.

We have paſt the night very tranquilly, my dear Edward, undiſturbed by any inhabitant either of this world or the other. The family were rather diſappointed this morning that we had nothing horrible to relate; Mr. Thomas laughed moſt unmercifully at our fears; he propoſed that his ſiſters and all the *women* folk in the

houſe ſhould likewiſe move their beds into my room, when he ſaid, he would engage to frighten us all into fits, only by ſhutting a cat into the paſſage. The weather proving uncommonly fine for the ſeaſon, Mr. Ewer called and propoſed to us to go to the church yard, and ſee the humble monument which he has cauſed to be erected to Sally's grandmother. Miſs Peterſons accompanied us, and we were all moſt agreeably ſurprized at the elegance of the deſign, notwithſtanding its extreme ſimplicity, for it is nothing more coſtly than wood, diſpoſed in the form of an urn, and painted ſtone colour; but the urn is ſo neatly formed, and the inſcription ſo ornamentally diſpoſed, that altogether it has the prettieſt effect imaginable.

Mr. Ewer very much enjoyed our approbation, and did not affect to diſdain the compliment beſtowed on his taſte; for the deſign, as you may ſuppoſe, was his. I had

had not been in this fatal church-yard ſince the accident that befel poor Sailor, and the remembrance coſt me a ſevere pang; I cannot forget that faithful creature's attachment, nor help reflecting on the pain in ſtore for his kind maſter who was ſo fond of him, when he finds his favourite is no more, and by what means—

Grateful remembrance ſtill on thee ſhall dwell—
Dear, loſt companion of my widow'd ſtate,
In tender ſadneſs oft of thee I'll tell,
And drop a tear when I recall thy fate.

We continued our walk through part of Mr. Altead's pleaſure grounds, which, though in a ſtate of utter neglect, have ſtill, like a faded beauty, ſome fine remains; there is even ſomething pleaſing in their very wildneſs, which, if I were to become poſſeſſed of them, I ſhould be loth utterly to do away. We reached home too late for Miſs Peterſon to dreſs before dinner, and ſhe found her lover there; however,

he had reaſon to be well ſatisfied with her appearance, for the walk had heightened her fine bloom, and ſhe looked extremely pretty. After dinner the family dropped off by degrees, and left the young couple to explain themſelves. We are all in high good humour.

Thursday, Nov. 6.

When I came down to breakfaſt this morning, the ladies were very eager to ſhew me a purchaſe they had juſt made of a piece of black lace, which they thought a great bargain. I was deſired to gueſs the price, and as it was broad and fine, and very good, I thought I rated it very low at four ſhillings a yard. Judge my ſurprize when they told me they had bought the whole piece, conſiſting of eleven yards, for half a guinea! "It muſt have been ſtolen then,"

then," ſaid I.—" Oh! no indeed," anſwered Miſs Peterſon, " I'm ſure the young woman that brought it did not look at all like a thief; ſhe was quite a decent kind of perſon I aſſure you."— " She muſt then have been greatly diſtreſſed," ſaid I, " to part with it ſo much under its value." I might have added, and you are not very nice to take ſuch an unfair advantage of her neceſſities; however, I forbore the latter part of the obſervation, and it did not occur to the ladies, who had purchaſed ſo cheap a bargain, to interrupt the ſatisfaction it gave them. " It is very lucky," ſaid Mrs. Peterſon, " for Charlotte muſt have a new cloak, and ſhe has a trimming for it next of kin to nothing."

The lace thus diſpoſed of, we had leiſure to form conjectures about the vender of it, who, I muſt own, excited my intereſt much more. She is deſcribed as a genteel looking perſon, of about ſix or eight and twenty;

her countenance was in part concealed by a large cap and bonnet, both put on very forward, and ſhe ſeemed much agitated. She knocked at the kitchen door, and offered her lace for ſale; the ladies looked at it without any deſign to purchaſe, apprehending it would be too dear. She ſaid they ſhould have it for a guinea; they bid her half a one; which, after a little heſitation, ſhe burſt into tears and accepted. "I wiſh I had ſeen her," ſaid I, with an emotion I could not repreſs; "you call me every day for things of half the conſequence."—"Why ſhe had but one piece of lace," ſaid Miſs Peterſon, "and that we bought you ſee, ſo what ſignified calling you?"—"I ſhould not have outbid you for the lace, madam," ſaid I, "but I certainly ſhould have endeavoured to have diſcovered who or what the perſon could be who was in ſuch extreme diſtreſs."

When

When we had finiſhed our breakfaſt, I applied to Sally for full intelligence; but even ſhe, in her admiration of the great bargain, had forgot to obſerve which way the vender took. Yet, upon reflection, every one was aſtoniſhed from whence ſhe came: that it was very far, was not probable; yet that ſuch a kind of perſon ſhould be an inhabitant of the neighbourhood, without being known or noticed, was ſtill leſs likely. Harriet was as anxious as myſelf to find out this ſtranger, and we ſet out together in order to make a tour through the village, and trace her if poſſible. Our firſt enquiries were at a chandler's ſhop, the only one in the pariſh, where all that paſſes in it is uſually retailed, with its other wares. Obtaining no intelligence here, I own I was diſheartened; however we purſued our plan, and went next to Mrs. Smith's, our old protigée. We found this poor woman buſy at her ſpinning; her cottage very neat, and all her little ones in

good health; having had the good fortune to escape not only the small pox, but a putrid fever, which likewise rages here.

Harriet inquired if the eldest boy made any progress in his learning, and distributed among the little ones some sugar candy she had purchased at the chandler's shop. One of the least, encouraged by her kindness, climbed into her lap, and pawing her with his sticky fingers, said, "Pretty lady, pretty lady give I this."—"It is the half-penny you gave him this morning, madam," said his mother, "he shews you he has not spent it." Harriet said she had not seen the child before. "I beg pardon, madam, returned the mother, "Tommy said it was a pretty lady coming from Mrs. Peterson's, and I thought it must be you."—"How was the pretty lady dressed?" said Harriet, "had she such a hat as mine?"—"No," said the child, putting both his hands over his face, as if to shew that her head dress concealed

concealed it, "black, all black, like puffy." We recollected that our incognita was described in black; it was certainly she that the child had met; but we could learn nothing farther. Mrs. Smith had not seen or heard of any stranger, and we returned as we went.

As we were proceeding homeward, across the grounds, we met Mr. Ewer returning from angling; he joined us, and walked with us till within sight of the house. We were both eager to acquaint him with the morning's adventure, to know if we could gather any intelligence from him; he could give us no information: but, at least, he partook our sentiments, and promised to spare no pains to discover the object of so reasonable a curiosity.

"It is part of my calling, you know," said he, "to find out and to succour fair

damſels in diſtreſs. This is an adventure that ſavours of Quixotiſm, and is quite in my line." He then aſked me what I would give for four good-for-nothing lines that came into his head yeſterday in the church-yard, as an epitaph for poor Sailor? "I will give you," ſaid I, "four more, that I promiſe you, ſhall be no better, compoſed in the ſame place and on the ſame occaſion."—"It is very ſingular," ſaid Harriet, "but I really had a little poetical fancy at the ſame time too; however, I ſhall never venture to diſcloſe it."—"Oh! Miſs Harriet," ſaid Mr. Ewer, "if the confidence is not mutual, I declare off; at leaſt my production ſhall be only for Mrs. Willar's private ear, who is ſo good as to promiſe a reward ſo much beyond any thing I can claim." I undertook to remove Harriet's ſcruples, and opened the budget myſelf with the little ſtanza you have already ſeen. Mr. Ewer's came next.

Oh,

Oh, faithful Sailor, could desert
Have sav'd thee from thy doom,
Thy mistress had not mourn'd thy loss,
Nor I inscrib'd thy tomb.

Harriet then repeated her's :

Oh you, ye gentle, who lament
Your spaniel when he dies,
With tears bedew the monument
Where faithful Sailor lies.

We both agreed in giving the laurel to the young poetess, and it is accordingly her lines that are to have the preference, notwithstanding her modest dissent and utmost opposition.

Friday, Nov. 7.

Oh! my Edward, how the wind has blown this night; it disturbed my rest more effectually and more alarmingly than any troubled spirit, besides my own, could

have done. I lay awake and thought of my love, of thouſands of others who were perhaps even more expoſed; who have wives too, and children, alas! to be never returned to more. We had company to ſpend the evening, a very large party, all the neighbouring families, and ſome ſtrangers; both the Mr. Bertrams, and likewiſe Mr. Deacon, whoſe hopes ſeem to revive with thoſe of his friend. Harriet's relations depend much on the force of example; it was ſeveral times hinted in the courſe of the evening, that one wedding never failed to produce ſeveral. The youth redoubled his aſſiduities, unchecked by his fair one's coldneſs; he aſſumed the *ton* of a declared and accepted ſuitor, and hardly ſuffered any one elſe to approach her. Teazed with his importunity, her chagrin at laſt got the better of her gentleneſs. "Dear Mrs. Willars," ſhe ſaid, "do aſſiſt me. I cannot ſpeak to any one, nor ſtir a ſtep for this man.—Sir, I will ſit by Mrs. Willars,"

Willars," continued ſhe in a tone of vexation, for he was endeavouring to prevent her. The ſwain, who half ſuſpects me for an oppoſer of his ſuit (very wrongfully though, for I never allow myſelf to ſpeak my opinion), was ſlinking off when Mr. Thomas came to his relief. "There, Deacon, man, ſet thy chair between them, never let two women ſit together; there'll be always miſchief." He then forced a chair between us, which obliged us to ſeparate. Mr. Ewer dropped in accidentally, but did not ſtay long; he gave Harriet a little ſlip of paper containing another epitaph. "I durſt not," ſaid he, "ſhew it to Mrs. Willars myſelf, ſhe will not approve it; prevail upon her to read it, and never mention a word of it to me." He ſuſpects, I ſuppoſe, that I ſhall think the compliment too high; he is ſo far right in his fears; indeed I loved poor Sailor too well to like to be complimented at his expence. However, I ſhall copy the lines, out of a little vanity,

vanity, and to ſhew my Edward that I have ſtill a flatterer.

To pity thy lamented doom,
Is difficult to me;
Such precious tears bedew thy tomb,
I rather envy thee.

However, the compliment is only in part mine; Harriet has wept too, and I doubt her tears are at leaſt as precious as mine.

Saturday, Nov. 8.

The weather is wet, and I have nothing intereſting to relate of the preſent; I ſhall therefore go back a little in order to retail a kitchen converſation wherein I made a conſpicuous figure at our laſt waſhing time. The Miſs Peterſons uſually iron their own ſmall linen; I do the like, and ſometimes upon theſe occaſions we are quite a large party,

party, for there is a chairwoman beſides the ſervants. This perſon, who is called Mrs. Hall, is always well provided with ſubjects of converſation, as ſhe knows every thing that paſſes in the pariſh. She is extremely communicative, and very free of her remarks. Her chief topic at the time I hint at, was the dearneſs of proviſions; the ſcarcity of money; the hardſhips of the labouring poor; on which ſhe deſcanted in a manner that ſavoured very much of the doctrine of equality and Tom Payne. I was at length, little as I love altercation, rouſed to take a part in the argument; and had, at leaſt, the ſatisfaction of being attended to, as well by the ſervants, as by the perſon to whom I addreſſed myſelf; who, if they were not convinced I was in the right, ſeemed, however, flattered that I thought it worth my while to aim at convincing them.

"If it were poſſible, Mrs. Hall," ſaid I, "to make an exact partition of all the money and eſtates in the world, at ſo much a head, I would give you about ſix months to ſee every thing reſtored to much the ſame, or even a worſe ſtate than at preſent, to have at leaſt as many poor, and far more diſcontented. The frugal, the provident, the induſtrious, would always augment their ſtore: the avaricious, the ſelfiſh, and deſigning, would ſpoil from the indolent and the improvident, till you would find the extremely indigent nearly the ſame perſons as now; and thoſe who have grown rich, no matter by what means, in the preſent ſyſtem of things, the ſame would contrive to grow rich again. There would, however, be this additional evil, that thoſe who were born and bred to great expectations, without prudence to ſave their money, or ability to earn more; without reſtraining laws to ſupply their ill-conduct

and

and prevent their deſpoling their families, would be beggared without reſources; for do not ſuppoſe that the miſerly, who have grown rich by their folly, will be of a diſpoſition to relieve their diſtreſs; that would be a contradiction in nature. No, my good friend, till you can ſo order matters as to contrive that every body ſhall be born with equal natural abilities and the ſame diſpoſitions, never believe that their fortunes can remain equal; human nature as it is will oppoſe it. However, admitting, for argument's ſake, that ſuch an order of things were poſſible or laſting, how ſhould we be bettered? who would be found to plough, to till, to do all kinds of neceſſary labour? When all were equally rich, we ſhould run the riſk of wanting, in the midſt of our own equality of riches, all the neceſſaries of life, and, ſuppoſing every thing to be provided us, another great evil would ariſe, half our virtues would have no exerciſe, and conſequently

ſcarce

ſcarce an exiſtence. Where muſt the benevolent ſeek the moſt refined and delicious of all delights, that of relieving the unfortunate, if there was no unfortunate to relieve? Man, not ſtanding in need of his fellow creature, would be even more ſelfiſh and narrow minded than at preſent. Believe me, Mrs. Hall, we cannot mend God's work, though each, by mending ourſelves, by ſtriving to correct our natural bent to diſcontent and repining, may make our lot ſupportable, however hard it may appear, compared to that of others. You are, as I ſuppoſe, a Chriſtian, and conſequently believe that this is not the world we were made for. I grant, that to ſuch as have no hope, the fate of many poor would be hard indeed; but when we reflect that this is only a ſtate of probation, that by ſupporting hardſhips and poverty with patience and reſignation to the Divine will, we ſecure to ourſelves everlaſting happineſs; that the poor are exempt from numberleſs

numberleſs temptations to which people in high ſtation are expo ed..—" Ah, madam!" ſaid Mrs. Hall, interrupting my fine harangue, " but I never wiſhed to be great; all I deſire is, to be about as rich as you or Madam Peterſon here, to do as I pleaſed, and not work more than I cared for."—" And you, perhaps, would then be more unhappy than at preſent; you probably do not know that it requires a mind well cultivated, or a happy natural diſpoſition, to know how to diſpoſe of a great deal of leiſure, pleaſantly, if not always profitably. You ſee we are glad to take up your trade, to amuſe ourſelves."—" O yes, madam! but you do no more than you like; if you was obliged to ſlave all day, and every day, and glad too to ſlave ſo, or want bread."—" That is very true, Mrs. Hall, yet nevertheleſs I am convinced that you are a happier woman, if you will but bring yourſelf to make the beſt of your lot, and bear the bitter of

it

it with patience as the diſpenſation of Providence, and the burthen deſtined you to bear, than many whom you are diſpoſed to envy, becauſe they appear to live at eaſe and have nothing to do. Of the irkſomeneſs of time hanging heavily on your hands, that you know not how to employ you have happily no idea, any more than of a plentiful table, of which you have no reliſh for want of an appetite to its dainties; the reſt that is not purchaſed by labour is no longer an enjoyment; the meals in expecting which you have not ſuffered a little hunger, have no zeſt; and, be aſſured, no money gives ſuch ſatisfaction, or does one ſo much good, as that which is of our own honeſt earnings. There are many inſtances of perſons who, after having ſpent the beſt part of their lives in acquiring a fortune, when having arrived at the ſummit of their wiſhes, they retired to enjoy themſelves, have not found a life, without its daily avocations, ſo irkſome as

to

to ſeek to engage in buſineſs again. I have heard of one in particular who, after having made an eaſy fortune by ſelling of pork in London, had retired into the country, found himſelf ſo at a loſs, that he was glad to pay the perſons who ſucceeded him ſo much per week to be allowed to cut out the meat, and ſerve his cuſtomers as before?"

"So, Mrs. Hall," ſaid Miſs Peterſon, "when you have made a fortune by your trade, you will be ſo at a loſs that you'll come and pay us by the day to rub over our fine linen." Every body laughed at this lively obſervation, and the lecture concluded with Harriet reading aloud, at my requeſt, the numbers 553 and 9 from the 8th volume of the Spectator, where the doctrine I had been endeavouring to ſupport is ſo admirably illuſtrated under the ſemblance of a viſion.

"Now

"Now ſuppoſe, Mrs. Hall, you could in this manner lay down your load of poverty, what would you chooſe to take up in its ſtead? Some burthen, you know, we poor mortals muſt inevitably bear. Would you chooſe bad health, a worthleſs huſband, an ill temper, the liſtleſsneſs and apathy of enjoyment ſo common to people who have nothing to do nor to wiſh for? what would you prefer?"—"Why, madam," ſaid ſhe, "I would change burthens with you, for I don't think you are very heavy loaded." "That is," ſaid Harriet, "becauſe Mrs. Willars bears her afflictions with patience; ſhe would do the ſame under your circumſtances could you exchange your poverty for her continual anxiety, ſeparated from an amiable huſband, whom ſhe adores, and for whoſe ſafety ſhe is under continual alarm; loaded like you, ſhe would ſtill trip lightly on, and bear her lot with cheerfulneſs; you would think her to be envied, and propoſe another exchange."

"Well

"Well then, miſs," ſaid ſhe, "ſuppoſe I was to change with you; I think you don't ſeem overloaded neither."

Harriet bluſhed. "Oh, Mrs. Hall, if you think I have no troubles——not that I mean to complain; thank God I have no reaſon."—"I believe ſo," ſaid Mrs. Hall, "I ſhall get nobody to change with me here, indeed the worſt off would have the worſt of the bargain."—"Why then, my good friend," ſaid I, "be adviſed by me, to prove that you have profited by what has been read to you, conſult patience inſtead of fancy; inſtead of your poverty, get rid of your diſcontent, and you will no longer have a wiſh to exchange with any body."

Mrs. Peterſon now propoſed to me to exchange a ſotting huſband for an abſent one. I refuſed the bargain; and Mr. Thomas, who had been eating his luncheon during

during the latter part of the converſation, aſked his ſiſters if they would change their trouble, of no huſband at all, againſt mine of an abſent one; thof it be much the ſame, continued he, you may as well be old maids as you be. Miſs Anne good humouredly aſked my opinion of the caſe? "Mine is certainly the hardeſt lot my dear," ſaid I, "yet I am not at all diſpoſed to change it. You will recollect that the lovers in the viſion, though they ſighed and groaned ſo heavily under their burthens, could not prevail on themſelves to lay them down."—"Pray, Tom," ſaid Miſs Peterſon, "what may your burthen be, you've a pretty good pair of ſhoulders; what would you chooſe to take up in the room of nothing you have to lay down."—"I think, miſs," ſaid he, "I've a pretty good load to bear with two fine lady ſiſters; I would back them both for a wife; the heavier the better, ſo 'tis with weight of metal."—"Well," retorted his

eldeſt ſiſter, "I'm ſure you're plague enough to me; I would exchange you, almoſt, for Mrs. Hall's poverty."—"For a knapſack, miſs, you mean," replied Mr. Thomas, "where you'll be ſure to find Mrs. Hall's poverty ſo cloſe packed with it, 'tis odds you'll never be able to lay it down. I met your captains coming here; I told them you were not at home."

His ſiſter called him an officious blockhead: however, it was agreed that it was lucky they had not been ſurprized in their preſent diſhabille, and the reflection that they were not totally forgotten by their gay ſparks, conſoled them for the reſt. It was this that determined the jaunt to the M—— ball, where they hoped to be again diſtinguiſhed by them.

Sunday, Nov. 9.

The weather was ſo bad yeſterday, all day, that we could not find one half hour to take the air, and a little exerciſe. This rather unhinged me, who am accuſtomed to walk every day, and I went to bed, without the leaſt diſpoſition to ſleep. Finding it impoſſible to cloſe my eyes, I amuſed myſelf with attempting to tranſlate a French epigram which Mr. Ewer had repeated to us the laſt time he was here. The ſubject could not diſpoſe to melancholy, as you ſhall judge. It was in conſequence of an offer made by a deſcendant of the great Condé's, of a thouſand crowns for the beſt poem in his praiſe; theſe lines, by a *Gaſcon*, obtained the prize:

Pour celebrer tant de vertus,
Tant de hauts faits, tant de gloire;
Mille ecus!—morbleu!—mille ecus!
Ce n'eſt pas un ſous par victoire!

Tranſlation.

Tranſlation.

To celebrate each val'rous deed,
His high deſert, his martial glory;
A thouſand crowns—is that the meed?—
'Tis not a halfpenny a ſtory!

I was repeating theſe lines to myſelf, with the complacency one uſually feels, when fancying one has hit upon a happy turn of expreſſion, when I was rouſed from my reverie by the ſound of footſteps moving cautiouſly along the paſſage. I liſtened a little to be convinced of the fact, before I awakened my companion; it was not, however, eaſy to awaken her; ſhe was in her firſt ſleep, and I called ſeveral times in vain; at length ſhe ſtarted up alarmed, calling out aloud to know what was the matter! "Huſh," ſaid I, "and liſten." For ſome minutes all was ſtill; at length we both diſtinctly heard the footſtep, which ſeemed as if ſtealing back again along the paſſage, the old boards creaked, and we

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were convinced it was not fancy. "I ſhould certainly get up," ſaid I, "and alarm the family, if I had a light."—"Oh, you would not, ſure," ſaid the terrified Harriet; "dear Mrs. Willars, don't ſtir; pray don't leave me; I ſhall die with fear." I never thought of ringing the bell, which, though it hangs in the kitchen, ſome one might have heard. In ſhort, we did nothing towards diſcovering the cauſe of our alarm; though fully convinced for this time it was not imagination. After liſtening very attentively for ſome time, without hearing any thing more, we both ſunk into forgetfulneſs.

When Sally came, as uſual, in the morning, we inquired if ſhe had found the paſſage doors open. Sally, all aghaſt, replied that both were faſt. "Then, ladies, you have heard ſomething to night."—"! ſaid we thought we heard ſome one walk along the paſſage; but as we neither heard the doors

open

open nor ſhut, we concluded they muſt have been left open."—"No, indeed, madam!" ſaid ſhe, in a voice of alarm, "I'm ſure no chriſtian creature could have been in the paſſage to night; it muſt have been a ſpirit." This was all the information we could obtain from poor Sally.

When we aſſembled, at breakfaſt, we found the ghoſt had got the ſtart of us; but, in travelling from my apartment through the kitchen to the parlour, its hiſtory had undergone various alterations and embelliſhments. It had walked the paſſage the whole night, rattling chains, and groaning church-yard groans; and neither Harriet nor Mrs. Willars had been able to ſleep a wink.

I could hardly obtain a hearing to our ſimple relation. Mr. Thomas contradicted me in plain terms, and inſiſted that we had told Sally, that we had heard chains

rattle the whole night. The reſt of the family were likewiſe very unwilling that the ſtory ſhould loſe any of its horrors. "La! was that all?" cried Miſs Peterſon, in a tone of diſapprobation, as we finiſhed our narration, "I dare ſay it was only the cat that crept ſo gently along the paſſage."

Mrs. Peterſon comforted herſelf, notwithſtanding, that her daughters were not lodged in that part of the houſe; for Nancy, poor child," ſhe ſaid, would be frightened into fits." It was at length determined, in ſpite of Mr. Thomas's unmerciful raillery, that Sally and the cook-maid ſhould ſleep in Harriet's room for a few nights; that we ſhould burn a wax light, and be prepared to call the family on the leaſt alarm.

Monday,

Monday, Nov. 10.

The paſſage underwent a very minute ſcrutiny laſt night previous to the retiring to reſt of its four female inhabitants. We convinced ourſelves that the bolts of the further doors were ſecure, that the other was ſhut, and that nothing alive was concealed in any part of it. The cook put her penknife under the latch of the door that has no faſtening, ſaying, "I' faith, nobody ſhall come through this way; if 'tis a ghoſt let him creep through the crannies." Theſe precautions taken, we all retired to our apartments, and diſpoſed ourſelves to ſleep; for my own part I was not long in ſucceeding; I had taken a great deal of exerciſe in the courſe of the day, and was ſoon in the arms of Morpheus. I ſlept ſo ſound that I heard nothing till the room door was violently thrown open; the ſcreams of our neighbours, as they ruſhed in, by convincing me what it was, quieted my firſt alarm,

which this ungentle intruſion had made very conſiderable. Harriet, thus frightened out of her firſt ſleep, was even more alarmed than I. She could hardly be convinced it was the two maids, and that nothing elſe followed them. It was ſome time before the damſels themſelves were in a ſtate to account for this abrupt viſit: at length we gathered from Sally that the cook waked firſt with the rattling of chains, that ſhe ſhook her bedfellow without ſpeaking, who likewiſe heard the chains, and dreadful groans both at the door and window; at length they fancied it was in the room, and both flew out of it as faſt as poſſible, and ſurpriſed us in the pleaſant way I have related. As ſoon as I had recovered my firſt ſurpriſe, I attempted to reaſon with theſe two terrified damſels, who had been placed as a guard for us, and acquitted themſelves ſo well. I would fain have perſuaded them that they had been dreaming, but it was not poſſible; Harriet too was of

their

their ſide, and maintained that a dream could not thus have affected them both.—I then propoſed, as we had a light, to ſearch the paſſage and their room; this, they ſaid, was preſumptuous, and far from conſenting to accompany me, they would not even ſuffer me to go there. To alarm the family was equally an ungainable point; the cook was crying like a child, and accuſing herſelf of preſumption for meddling in other people's concerns: it was all a judgment upon her, ſhe ſaid, for attempting to faſten the door of the paſſage, as if that could hinder the ghoſt from coming in. You may believe I was privately reſolving againſt ſuch guards in future. Having liſtened ſome time, without hearing the leaſt noiſe,—except an owl or a bat, which the light from our window cauſed to fly againſt it, and which renewed our company's apprehenſions—and finding that we were not likely to get rid of them, I propoſed that Harriet ſhould ſhare my bed, and give up her's to our

ſtout-hearted ſentinels; this was preſently agreed upon; they ſecured the door, and fright giving way to fatigue, we all reſted quietly without further interruption till morning. A knocking at the paſſage-door firſt reminded our damſels that they had overſlept their hour, and convinced me that the doors were both faſt as we had left them, which in effect they were. The ghoſt has however now eſtabliſhed his credit beyond the power of argument to gainſay; the paſſage is thought of with horror, and I expect the parſon muſt ſoon be ſent for to lay this troubled ſpirit in the Red Sea. I have, however, requeſted that we may have no more ſuch guards; indeed I believe it would be difficult to prevail on any of the ſervants to occupy Harriet's room: Mr. Thomas has, however, taken this poſt of honour and danger, and his bed is accordingly removing there. All the family ſhudder at his temerity; his mother particularly employs all her eloquence to diſſuade him: he is, however,

ever, reſolved, and ſays, he does not doubt but he ſhall be able to lay the ghoſt.

Tueſday, Nov. 11.

We have paſt a quiet night, my Edward, undiſturbed by any thing but the muſic of Mr. Thomas's ſonorous noſe, to which, however, we at length became accuſtomed, and fell aſleep. I dreamt that I was at ſea with you, and that the ſnoring of one of the ſailors, our near neighbour, prevented my ſleeping; thence, I infer, that the muſic did not ceaſe. Have you not obſerved, that often, in ſleeping, one is ſenſible of noiſes which do not awaken, but occaſion dreams, ſomewhat in the nature of mine? Apropos of dreams—I often remark, that the waking thoughts appear nearly as ſtrange and unconnected. I ſometimes ſay to myſelf—How could ſuch an out-of-the-way thing

come into my head? I then trace the idea from link to link, till I diſcover that it was perhaps a card of compliment that put me in mind of an elephant, or ſomething quite as unlike it. I apprehend that in our ſleep the ſame cauſe operating, while we are in an incapacity for tracing it, and perhaps with even more rapidity, it happens, thence, that we find ourſelves ſo ſuddenly and ſo unaccountably tranſported from one place, and from one ſubject to another.

Wednesday, Nov. 12.

Mr. Thomas brought company with him yeſterday to tea, Mr. Bertram, the triumphant ſuitor, and Mr. Deacon, the unſucceſsful one. Mrs. Peterſon tells me that ſhe thinks her daughter will be married before Chriſtmas, and adds, that it would make all the family very happy, if Harriet was reaſonable

ſonable enough to give Mr. Deacon hopes of an union at the ſame time. "Could not you perſuade her a bit, Mrs. Willars?" ſaid ſhe; "ſhe minds you more than her own natural friends; do, that's a good lady, try what you can do; the poor boy would make her a very good huſband. I anſwered that Miſs Harriet ſeemed to have a decided averſion to the young man. "And for why, Mrs. Willars?" ſaid ſhe; "I'm ſure ſhe ought to like him." "Alas! my dear Madam," returned I, "we are ſuch poor weak creatures, and love is ſo unreaſonable a thing that we often do not love people becauſe, upon all accounts, we ought to love them, and fix our hearts, where, if reaſon were to guide, we ſhould not even beſtow the ſmalleſt particle of it. Such are the paſſions." Mrs. Peterſon ſaid, "that if I was to ſeem to like the poor boy a little myſelf, it might do a great deal; I ſhould never have fancied my Mr. Peterſon," ſaid ſhe, "if I had not thought a friend of mine

very

very much in love with him, that put me into conceit of him, and rather than Nanny Owlett ſhould have 'en, I fairly got up the *N'ichot* tree myſelf. I doubt I ſhould make but an awkward figure at pretending to be charmed with Mr. Deacon, for he is quite as little to my taste as Harriet's, though I can aſſert with truth, and the utmoſt ſincerity, that though I ſpeak freely of him to you, I never do to her; and ſhould even reproach myſelf ſeverely if any ridicule of mine had in the leaſt occaſioned Harriet's diſlike to him. The poor youth has rope enough, and may hang himſelf.

Thursday, Nov. 13.

Mr. Deacon, who had accompanied his friend, Mr. Thomas, to a neighbouring market yeſterday, encouraged by him and ſome cheering cups, again ſpent the even-

ing

ing here. They entered with triumphant countenances: "So, Mrs. Willars, ſo couſin Harriet, we have brought you ſome news; when did you ſee your friend Ewer?"—Harriet changed colour, and I, recollecting that it was really ſome time ſince, felt a little alarmed. "We have not ſeen him very lately; I hope no accident has happened to him," ſaid I. "Accident!—I don't know what you *vimen* may call accident; howſomever 'tis nothing very uncommon for ſuch as he; he keeps a girl t'other ſide o' the common, juſt by Sal's mother's—that's all. Nobody cares to go that way, becauſe for why—o' the ſmall-pox; but Deacon and I rode by this morning, zo we zeed her and him walking there along the green ſward; ſo with that I calls at John Higgſes there, juſt by hedge-ſide, and axt him who the wench was; and zo he upt and told me ſhe was Ewer's miſs, and as how he kept her there at old mother Jenkinſes there, cloſe by Sal's mother's; that ſhe was main poor when

when firſt ſhe came there after him ; but he has ſet her up ſmartiſh, and goes to ſee her every day, ſays John,—And night too, I ſuppoſe, John, ſays I. Why you knows, ſays he, he comes to inquire after the ſick people, and zo 'tis pure handy. Zo John and I had a good laugh, and I zed I'd tell our women volk, for they took him for a non-ſuch. They'll like him ne'er a bit the worſe for that, maſter, ſays John ; ſhe's a good ſightly body, and you know 'tis nato-ral." This long detail gave me time to re-cover my ſurpriſe : " It is perhaps his wife," ſaid I. " O, to be ſure !" anſwered Mrs. Peterſon ; " then why not take her home ; why ſhould he conceal her ? No ; 'tis his miſs, 'tis clear, and he dares not take her to Mrs. Clarke's ; ſhe would not live under the ſame roof with ſuch a naſty puſs. I knew he was good for nothing ever ſince I heard he had a wife, and did not live with her ; he has ſpent his ſubſtance, I warrant me, upon such creatures, and I ſuppoſe ſhe would

would not ſtay with him. Can't one have the naſty ſlut ſent out of the pariſh?"— "Mother," ſaid Mr. Thomas, "if you turn all ſuch naſty ſluts out of the pariſh, it would be curſedly thinn'd; but 'tis a comfort you beh't overſeer." During this diſcourſe Harriet ſat in ſilent conſternation, evidently much diſturbed, yet not venturing to utter a ſingle ſyllable. The ſubject which diverted one part of the company the more for the diſtreſs it cauſed the other, laſted the whole evening; for however lightly gentlemen might think of a little gallantry in themſelves, or their neighbours, it was a heinous crime in poor Ewer. I contented myſelf with ſaying, I ſhould not believe ſuch a ſtory without further proof: upon which Mr. Thomas was for ſending for Dame Higgs, John Jenkins, and all the inhabitants of the common to convince me. I made him very angry by ſaying, "I ſhould no more rely upon their accounts than his, well aware, as I was, of the propenſity of the ignorant to ſcandal,

ſcandal, and for judging ill of every thing they could not account for." Mr. Thomas inquired if he was included among the ignorant, and made me a bow for the implied compliment before I could have time to diſclaim it. "The cap fits," ſaid his eldeſt ſiſter, "wear it Tom, wear it." After we retired to our apartments, the ſubject ſtill laſted with Harriet and me. She was extremely hurt, and I exerted myſelf to convince her of the improbability of ſuch a report. "Do you think, my dear," ſaid I, "whatever may be Mr. Ewer's private propenſities, that he would riſk ſuch an adventure in a place where he muſt know it could not long remain a ſecret? How ſolicitous has he ever appeared to deſerve our good opinion; how cautious, modeſt and reſerved in all his converſation and demeanour?—Can you ſuppoſe he would at once ſhake off all reſtraint of decorum, and brave the public opinion in ſo ſhameleſs a manner? If he has not virtue, he has decency; indeed I believe

lieve him to have both, and will not condemn him unheard." "My dear Mrs. Willars," returned Harriet, burſting into tears, "you know it is not, it cannot be any thing to me; yet I believe it would half kill me to be obliged to think ill of that man. Is it not ſtrange that he ſhould not have been here lately? ſince firſt he became acquainted here, he never abſented himſelf ſo long before: and then, who or what can this perſon be? his wife, as my aunt obſerved, would be with him if they were ſo far reconciled as to be ſo near in the ſame neighbourhood: 'tis certainly very myſterious: this ſtrange account quite bewilders me, and diſtreſſes me to death. I cannot deny it."—"Then why will you believe it, my dear," ſaid I?—"I do not quite believe it," ſaid ſhe;" but it certainly is not impoſſible, and doubt, you know, is ſo painful."—"Diſtruſt is a villainous inmate, certainly, my love; and, withal ſo new to you! for my own part I had rather

be

be deceived every day of my life than harbour it."

Mr. Thomas, juſt returned from his company, here interrupted our converſation. He knocked at the door, informing us that he ſhould leave the further paſſage door open, that one of the ſervants might come through to call him betimes in the morning. "Zo don't be fraught if you hears a ſtep along the floor; that's all," added Mr. Thomas. He was right to give us this notice, for Harriet, whoſe ſlumbers were none of the ſoundeſt, would elſe, ſhe ſays, certainly have concluded that the apparition had brought company, and have been much alarmed, as ſhe ſeveral times heard walking along the paſſage.

Friday,

Friday, Nov. 14.

Harriet engroſſed the whole of my attention yeſterday; I quite exhauſted myſelf in endeavouring to divert her. The day was gloomy and partook of the ſeaſon; however, I prevailed on her to walk, and convinced by experience that when the mind is too ill at eaſe for reading or reflection, there is no relief like the practice of active benevolence, I led firſt to our acquaintance Mrs. Smith, in purſuit of ſome ſubject for it there. Our unexpected arrival cauſed a little buſtle, ſome perſon ſeemed to hurry out of ſight; we ſuſpected it might be her huſband, and affected to take no notice; but the circumſtance utterly diſconcerted our plan, which was to have provided warm winter cloathing for the younger children; it was in vain to think of ſuch a thing, unleſs convinced that our ſuſpicions were unfounded, for if they were juſt,

juſt, it would be only ſupplying drink for the worthleſs father, who would much rather ſtrip his infants than clothe them; we therefore contented ourſelves with diſtributing ſome halfpence among the children, and left the family to their father and their fate.

Returning home round the church-yard, to prolong our walk, we found ourſelves unbidden gueſts at a village wedding. The ſcene, however, was nothing leſs than arcadian, nor paſtoral love, nor rural innocence, nor fairly pictures of happineſs, alas! was there. The bride, a bouncing damſel, particularly large, juſt where virtuous maidens pique themſelves upon being very ſmall, her fair countenance crimſoned rather with tears than bluſhes, ſobbing aloud, led the van, accompanied by an elderly man, who ſeemed to be her father. The bridegroom, a good looking young fellow of about twenty, handcuffed

and bound, was forced along to his happineſs between a luſty officer of the peace and another of the pariſh, exclaiming loudly and violently againſt the compulſive union, and ſwearing all the way, that however they might force him to marry the ſtrumpet, he would never live with her, but run away the inſtant he was at liberty. This novel ſpectacle excited our attention, and we ſtopped to enquire into the cauſe of it. I queſtioned the man who appeared to be the girl's father, how as to the reaſon of his ſuffering her to be married to a perſon who ſeemed ſo averſe to her, and with whom ſhe could expect nothing but ill uſage? He ſaid he could not help it, it was the pariſh; and, beſides, the fellow had ruined the wench, and ought to marry her. "I ruin her! you lying old dog," replied the bridegroom, "wasn't ſhe common to all the pariſh? 'twas you that ruined her by letting her run about as you did;

did; and the child's no more mine than it is yours."

"It is no uſe to jaw, maſter," ſaid one of the officers, "the wench has ſworn the child to you; and, it ſeems, you've as good a right as any body elſe; ſo come along; the parſon waits." — "I've no friend to ſtand by me, madam," ſaid the young fellow, "I ſhall be ruined for ever if they make me marry her; I ſhall never ſettle to any thing."

The poor bride only ſobbed the louder during this dialogue; it was not poſſible to help pitying her. "Had you not better refuſe this marriage, young woman," ſaid I to her: "what can you expect from it but miſery?"—"She had not beſt refuſe it," ſaid the officer; "indeed ſhe knows better; the young fellow is a vaſt deal too good for her, but he belongs to another

pariſh,

pariſh, and we ſhall be quit of them both; ſo come along and be tied up," ſaid he, hawling the poor fellow along.

Finding our interference of no avail, we exhorted the parties to patience and mutual forbearance; and, with a ſmall preſent to enforce our advice left them to their hard fate. But we returned wholly occupied with our adventure, which for ſome time drowned the remembrance of every thing elſe; however we did not find that it affected any body but ourſelves. Mr. Thomas obſerved, that it was very well done to rid the pariſh of ſuch an incumbrance; and, as for the man, if he had a hard bargain, he might run away and leave it. Yet, is it not a ſhameful proceeding, my dear Edward, and highly diſgraceful, to be ſuffered in a free, or, indeed, any country? We were deeply concerned for both parties; for the girl, though it ſeems ſhe bears a bad character, appeared to feel ſo ſenſibly

the miſery ſhe had to dread, it was not poſſible to help ſympathiſing a little with her; how much more for the poor youth, who is ſaid to be ſober and induſtrious, and was to pay ſo dear for his imprudent connection with her!

We had the mortification to be told, that during our abſence Mr. Ewer had called, and ſeemed much diſappointed at not meeting with us. "He laid hook and line for an invitation to tea," ſaid Mrs. P. but I thought of his miſs, and could ſcarce be commonly civil to him.

Saturday, Nov. 15.

Oft wand'ring theſe lone ſhades among,
I think, how once a bride,
Upon my Edward's arm I hung,
And rambled by his ſide.

With

With hearts diffuſing pleaſure round,
We view'd fair Nature's face;
Beauty in all her features found,
And joy in ev'ry place.

Truth, Faith, and Love the theme inſpir'd,
How eloquent wert thou!
How oft repeated, ſtill untir'd,
I hear'd thy tender vow!

To thee, dear partner of my ſoul,
Its ev'ry thought was known,
Its guide, its guard, its kind controul,
Its counſel, thou alone!

Ah! why was union thus complete,
A bliſs, ſo true, ſo pure,
Hours to remembrance ſtill ſo ſweet,
Not given to endure?

But honour call'd, and Edward flew;
"Be comforted," he cried,
"I go to be more worthy you,
"My lov'd, my lovely bride."

O! abſence, neceſſary ill!
Without thee, I'd forgot,
Bleſt in my Edward's converſe ſtill,
Mortality's ſad lot.

Sunday, Nov. 16.

Mr. Ewer's evil genius ſeems determined to prevent our meeting; he came this afternoon, while we were all from home on a viſit to the Mrs. Bennet, as I have already mentioned to you; you may judge of the ſort of entertainment to be expected at this lady's houſe, from what paſſed on a former occaſion. There was, however, if poſſible, even more goſſipping.

"So Mr. Ewer has brought the wench he kept ſo long at M———, into our pariſh at laſt," ſaid Mrs. Bennet; "I wonders, for my part, at ſome people's aſſurance; and that the overſeers don't take her up, a naſty puſs, to take a married man from his own natural wife. They ſays, as how, there's children; but, for my part, what with the weather's being ſo bad, and the ſmall-pox that way, and one thing and t'other,

t'other, I hasn't been able to go to ſee. What, does he come to your houſe as often as he uſed, Mrs. Peterſon? Mrs. P. anſwered, that ſhe had not ſeen the gentleman much, lately. "Gentleman! a pretty gentleman," ſaid Mr. Bennet, "what ſhould make he a gentleman?"—"Why, his keeping a miſs," ſaid Mr. Thomas, who happened to be of the party.—"Why that's very gentlemanlike," ſaid Mr. Bennet," as I've heard 'em ſay; but as for the matter of money, and the like o'that, (putting his hands in his pockets,) I believes, as here, I'm a better gentleman myſelf."—"Why, if he's that way inclined after bad women, and ſuch ſort," ſaid Mrs. B. "he may ſpend a pour of money for all he ſeems ſo poor; for he muſt keep his wife, though he don't live with her; ſo 'tis burning the candle at both ends, as one may ſay."

Much more was ſaid to the ſame effect, to which we were conſtrained to be ſilent hearers, for what could we ſay, in our utter ignorance of the foundation of this ſcandalous report? At length, to our inexpreſſible relief, Mrs. Peterſon made a motion to withdraw; and we returned to a little private chat more congenial to our feelings.

To-morrow I have promiſed to accompany the Miſs Peterſons to M——, to give my opinion on the momentous buſineſs of the purchaſe of wedding cloaths for the eldeſt, who, I believe, will ſhortly have occaſion for them.

Wednesday, Nov. 19.

I have been abſent from Southlands till this day, my deareſt Edward, much againſt my

my will, I do aſſure you; for when I cannot write to you, and think of you uninterruptedly, as here, where I have hours ſet apart for this ſoothing employ, I feel more cruelly than ever our ſeparation. I grow attached to my retirement, which beſides, my beloved Harriet, who would endear any place, has a thouſand intereſting charms, of which even this dreary month cannot deſpoil it. I pleaſe myſelf with thinking you will one day ſee and feel them as I do. But to return to my excurſion; Mrs. Parkitt, who is, as I believe I have already told you, a ſiſter of Mr. Bertram's, Miſs Peterſon's ſuitor, is likewiſe in herſelf hoſpitable and fond of company. She found ſo many kind pretences to detain us, when we would have returned, that there was no eſcaping: one day it was the weather, the next ſhe had company; ſhe wiſhed us to meet; the days were ſhort, and all the buſineſs of purchaſing and giving orders to milliners and mantua-makers could ſcarcely be completed in

one. Thus we were induced to ſtay three days inſtead of the one propoſed; a ſcheme to which, as it was perfectly agreeable to the Miſs Peterſons, I could not object, particularly as the lover was every day of our parties. We have made ſome very ſmart purchaſes; but I aſſure you I never expected to have been conſulted in buſineſs of this kind. I have, however, endeavoured to juſtify the compliment thereby paid to my judgment, by always giving it with an air of reflection and importance, and by taking particular care that it ſhould accord with that of the ladies who required it of me. I have had an opportunity of ſeeing great part of the viſiting people of this ſmall but gay town, as Mrs. Parkitt's party of laſt night was very numerouſly attended, chiefly indeed by ladies, for there were but few beaux: among them I was particularly ſtruck only with one; not for her beauty, wit, politeneſs, or agreeableneſs—for ſhe was eminently deficient in all theſe qualifications—

fications—but as there were others equally ſo, it was not either for her defects that ſhe attracted my particular attention, but for the extraordinary court paid her by all the reſt: the uppermoſt ſeat and firſt ſervices were all for her; did ſhe ſpeak? Every one liſtened; did ſhe move? A crowd followed her; her will was law, her opinion deciſion without appeal. The few men preſent neglected the pretty and the young to addreſs all their compliments and attentions to her; ſhe ſeemed elected, by common conſent, queen of the company; it was an eſtabliſhed thing, and excited neither envy nor ſurprize. She received this general homage with an air of cold contempt, and did not condeſcend to be civil to any body, not even to the miſtreſs of the houſe. I had ſet her down for ſome inſolent woman of quality, who thought ſhe did the little inhabitants of a country town too much honour by mixing with them; but was quite out in my conjectures. She is a viſitor at M——,

Edward, and is reported to have a fortune of ſixty thouſand pounds, which ſhe inherited about two years ago from a very diſtant relation, and quite unexpectedly; ſhe has had no education, nor been at all uſed to company; her money is all her merit—but it ſeems, having that, no other is required. Such is the world.—We returned home this afternoon; I found my little friend in good health, and rejoiced to ſee me. She occupied her couſin's apartment during their abſence, not feeling brave enough to run a riſk of encountering our neighbour the ghoſt alone. "Only think, how unlucky!" ſhe ſays, "dear Mrs. Willars, poor Mr. Ewer has again been here, and there was nobody to receive him; he will think we avoid him purpoſely, and this ſtrange ſtory will never be cleared up."

Thursday,

Thursday, Nov. 20.

I overheard a converſation between two of the maids this morning, very undeſignedly I do aſſure you, although it related to me. They were making the bed in the next room, with the door open, and did not know that I was within hearing. The ghoſt was the ſubject, which they accounted for by ſuppoſing Mrs. Willars's huſband loſt at ſea, "and it is he that walks," ſaid one of them. "May be he is taken priſoner," ſaid the other, "by the rattling of his chains." They both marvelled that he did not walk ſtill, as in fact no one has been diſturbed lately. "Why you knows," ſaid the cook, "Mrs. Willars has been out theſe two nights; beſides he might only juſt come to give warning of his death like, and ſo not walk any more. Miſtreſs ſaid all along 'twas he." I can laugh at this idle ſtuff at preſent, my Edward, yet who can aſſure me

of your health and welfare? I hear nothing of you, and have only hope to ſupport me; and, alas! how fallacious may that prove!

O flatt'ring hope, thou dear deluder,
Without thee, what are life's frail joys?
Welcome, ſweet inmate, kind intruder,
The only bliſs that never cloys.

Come paint me caſtles all ideal,
With colours ſtol'n from Iris' bow,
And o'er my views, ſweetly unreal,
The glowing tints of Fancy throw.

From all I love, when fate divides me,
And boundleſs ſeas between us roar,
Oh! huſh the fear that oft miſguides me,
That whiſpers ſtill, "ye meet no more!"

Thou canſt defy both time and diſtance,
All obſtacles before thee fly,
The work of years, by thy aſſiſtance,
Wrought in the moment we deſcry.

Then paint me Health and Fortune ſmiling
On that dear head, now tempeſt-toſt,
My boding fears, ſweet Hope, beguiling,
Reſtore the peace my ſoul has loſt.

Friday,

Friday, Nov. 21.

Mr. Ewer has at length found an opportunity of clearing up our doubts entirely to our ſatisfaction, and very much to our relief, for I ſeek not to ſeparate myſelf from my friend, as not having felt nearly the ſame anxiety. I am as well pleaſed as ſhe can be to have the cudgels to take up in an aggrieved perſon's defence. In ſhort, my dear Edward, our poor friend called this morning, and found the parlour clear of all company but ſuch as were diſpoſed to lend a favourable ear; need I name Harriet and myſelf? "My ill ſtars have purſued me, ladies," ſaid he, immediately after the firſt compliments, "with even more than their uſual malignity. It is an age ſince I have had the happineſs of meeting with you; indeed I began almoſt to deſpair of ever being admitted to that honour again." "The loſs was ours, Sir," ſaid I, rather coldly.—"I hope you have enjoyed your health, and not

not been deſtitute of amuſement." "I have had a little employment very much to my taſte, Ma'am," ſaid he; "but does my fancy ſpread its gloom over every thing, or have I really had the misfortune to offend you, ladies? Dear Miſs Harriet, why ſo very reſerved? relax a little in pity, or I ſhall be afraid to tell you that I have ſucceeded in your commiſſion, and found out your fair incognita." This intelligence reconciled us to him at once. "You are a true knight," ſaid I, "but more of this diſtreſſed damſel I beg of you; in what enchanted caſtle was ſhe concealed, and who is ſhe?" "She is, Madam, a very worthy young woman, in very great diſtreſs; ſhe is an old acquaintance of my own, (Harriet coloured violently,) brought here by accident, by way of being concealed, and found out, when ſhe leaſt expected it in the ſame manner." "Pray, Sir," ſaid Harriet, interrupting him, and colouring ſtill higher, "Does ſhe lodge?—does ſhe lodge?—" She could

could not finiſh her queſtion. "She lodges, Miſs Harriet, with her *mother*," laying ſome ſtreſs upon that word, "at a cottage very near that of your good Sally's mother's, where ſhe has remained unnoticed and unknown, I believe, a month. You know that part of the village has ſcarce had any intercourſe with the reſt on account of the contagion that was apprehended from it: two days after I had the pleaſure of ſeeing you the laſt time, wandering that way, I called to inquire after the health of the convaleſcents. While I was ſpeaking to the mother from her caſement, ſhe turned away abruptly, 'I beg pardon,' ſaid ſhe, 'but here's the young gentlewoman; ſhe wants ſomebody to draw water for her; if I can't find one of the boys, I muſt go myſelf.' I turned round, and ſaw a genteel looking woman approaching; ſhe held down her head, and would have avoided me, but I had caught a glimpſe of her features, and knew them through all the diſguiſe of paleneſs and ſorrow.

row. Heav'ns, Miſs Larimer, is it you? She looked up, and recollecting me, no longer ſhunned my obſervation. 'Alas! it is indeed me; but how came you, Sir, in this remote place? has Providence ſent you to our aſſiſtance? I begin to hope.' Your mother is then with you, Madam? 'Yes,' returned ſhe, 'we are ſent here to periſh; and I, for my ſins, am to ſee her go firſt.' I intreated to be conducted to her mother, and ſhe did not ſeem averſe: her wretched abode was not diſtant, the next cottage was one dame Jenkins's, and there ſhe was lodged. The hovel has two rooms; you paſs through one to the other: the innermoſt was the apartment of theſe ladies, who, when I formerly knew them, lived in what might comparatively be called a palace: the place, however, was juſt habitable, the floor was boarded, and there was a fireplace; the furniture conſiſted of a miſerable bed, two or three high-backed wormeaten chairs, and a few other articles of indiſpenſable

diſpenſable neceſſity. Mrs. Larimer was ſitting in ſomething like a great chair ; ſhe looked extremely ill, and was ſo ſurpriſed at ſeeing me as to be on the point of fainting. I ſtood looking at her in ſpeechleſs concern, while her daughter gave her ſome drops and water, and explained her unexpected meeting with me. She interrupted the apology I was beginning to make for my intruſion, with one for the effect it had upon her. ' My ſpirits are ſo weak,' ſaid the poor lady, ' and I am ſo unuſed to any thing like pleaſure, that the ſight of an old friend had nearly overcome me ; but, believe me, I am very glad to ſee you ; your good heart is ſhocked to find us in ſuch a place ; 'tis a ſad change from what it uſed to be ; but God's will be done ! I begin to think he has not quite forſaken us, ſince we meet ſo unexpectedly with ſuch a good old friend : how ſtrangely things come about !' I could not immediately anſwer her, to inquire the meaning of this vaſt reverſe of fortune ; but before

before I repeat what I gathered from her, it may, perhaps, be neceſſary to give you a little inſight into her hiſtory; I will be as brief as poſſible." We both requeſted him to proceed. "Mrs. Larimer is a native of Ireland," continued he, "ſhe was very handſome when young, but had little if any fortune. Her beauty gained her what was thought a ſplendid eſtabliſhment in Mr. Larimer, who had a good eſtate in Ireland, and lived in high ſtyle; he was always gay and expenſive, but for the firſt years of their marriage did not make her altogether unhappy. She bore him a ſon and a daughter, the firſt is dead within theſe few years, and ſince I had any connection with the family. Mr. Larimer not finding his native country ſufficiently amuſing, removed with his family to England; he rented a fine houſe in London, a country ſeat in Kent, and uſually ſpent a month or two of the winter at Bath. With theſe expedients, expenſive miſtreſſes, and gaming, he was not long in running out

out his eſtate. Mrs. Larimer he ſeldom ſaw, or when he did, it was to vent his ill-humour upon her; her health, as well as her happineſs, became the ſacrifice, but ſhe was never known to complain, and when I was acquainted with her was univerſally pitied and reſpected; her daughter was all her comfort, and her conſtant companion. You will expect to hear that his affairs went on from bad to worſe; his creditors became preſſing, he was obliged to part with his country houſe, and retrench a little; he took cheap lodgings for his wife and daughter, and brought home a married woman to ſupply their place: this lady was expenſive, but ſhe was rich; ſhe had married a younger brother, who had not an halfpenny of his own, and this convenient huſband did not concern himſelf about her conduct, but cheerfully paid her half her income to be rid of her. I went to live at Briſtol about this time, and loſt ſight of them. Mrs. Larimer informed me that ſhe ſoon after loſt her

her ſon, and in him all defence againſt her huſband's tyranny; this miſtreſs's huſband died alſo, and Mrs. Larimer was to be removed by ſome means or other, as ſhe was now the only obſtacle to a legal union between theſe virtuous perſons. The lady even quitted her paramour, and refuſed to ſee him till he could offer her honourable terms. In this dilemma, his own fortune utterly waſted, and without reſource but in his miſtreſs's, he ſet about prevailing upon Mrs. Larimer to diſown her marriage with him; but for this neither threats nor promiſes could ſucceed. He then kept her pennyleſs, contrived to conceal his abode from her, and moved her from lodging to lodging, till at length he ſent her word that he had found her a comfortable ſituation in the country, whither, if ſhe would remove, keep herſelf concealed, and go by another name, he would ſend her immediately fifty pounds, and pay her that ſum regularly every half year. Hoping, yet ſcarce expecting

pecting that he would keep his word, ſhe agreed to every thing, and ſuffered herſelf and daughter to be conveyed hither; they were ordered to take the ſtage to M——, where a perſon met them with a carriage, and a letter from Mr. Larimer, requiring them to put themſelves into his care, and ſaying that he (her huſband) had left the kingdom, and did not purpoſe to return.—They obeyed,—for what elſe could they do? and were conveyed in the evening to this wretched abode. Their conductor obſerving how deeply they were affected at the ſight of it, and aſſured them that it was only for a few days, while a houſe was fitting up for their reception. He left them, pretending that he was going to haſten the preparations; but has never been heard of ſince. For a fortnight they lived upon hope, and the very little money they had left.—At that period Mrs. Larimer fell ſick, and wholly without the means of procuring her the leaſt relief; her daughter recollected

the

the piece of lace, of which you know the hiſtory; it was her own work, the amuſement of happy hours. She inquired what families there were in the neighbourhood likely to make ſuch a purchaſe, and ſet out trembling and heartleſs to diſpoſe of it.—She called at every houſe that had a tolerable appearance. Mrs. Peterſon's was the only one where ſhe was admitted; you know the reſt. I forced a ſmall preſent upon theſe diſtreſſed ladies, and queſtioned them very particularly to diſcover, if poſſible, a clue, whereby to find out this worthleſs oppreſſor, who, I doubt not, has given out that his wife is dead, and married his miſtreſs. They could give me no ſatisfactory intelligence: I have, however, been wholly engaged ever ſince in endeavouring to diſcover where he is concealed: hitherto my attempts have been unſucceſsful; but I have juſt applied by letter to an old correſpondent, who has an univerſal acquaintance, and on whoſe aſſiduity and intelligence I can

depend. I hope through his means to find Mr. Larimer out, and ſhame him into doing juſtice to his wife and daughter. In the mean time I depend upon two ladies of my acquaintance to ſoothe their grief."

As Mr. Ewer ended, we both burſt into violent exclamations againſt this unworthy perſecutor of merit and innocence. "I'll go this moment and tell my couſin," ſaid Harriet; "I'm ſure ſhe will be extremely vexed ſhe bought the lace ſo cheap." "'Tis a matter eaſy to repair," ſaid Mr. Ewer, and away ſhe flew. Mr. Ewer promiſed to introduce us to his unfortunate friends, and then withdrew. Harriet ſoon after returned with blank looks: ſhe had found her aunt and couſins very much diſpoſed to be incredulous; Mrs. Peterſon ſaid, ſhe was ſure the lace was no ſuch great bargain—Miſs Grove's cloak was trimmed with ſome every bit as good that coſt but little more—the woman had a fair price; for her part ſhe was ſick of hearing about it—Mr. Ewer

and

and Mrs. Willars might club and pay more if they liked it; but Harriet was required to ſet about helping her couſin to make her wedding ſhifts, and that would be better than filling her head with romantic fancies about people that nobody knew. "I'm ſadly afraid," ſaid Harriet, "that my aunt will not let me go and ſee theſe poor ladies, ſhe ſeems ſo ſet againſt them, and will have it that the youngeſt is Mr. Ewer's miſtreſs! This conjecture, which is but too probable, will ſpoil all my little plans, my dear Edward, I ſhall not chooſe to go alone with Mr. Ewer; I am not of age to eſcape cenſure, nor of hardineſs to overlook propriety. Oh! that you were here; how would all my ſcruples vaniſh! And what an active friend would theſe poor ladies find in you. At dinner I took care to introduce Mrs. Larimer's hiſtory, and went through it in ſpite of Mrs. Peterſon's endeavours to turn the converſation; but how unwilling narrow-minded people are to own themſelves miſtaken

miſtaken, I too well experienced. Mr. Thomas ſneered, and ſaid it was a good plauſible ſtory, though they had taken time about it, and Mr. Peterſon hardly condeſcended to liſten to it at all. I was not more ſucceſsful with the Mr. Groves, who ſpent the evening here; they laughed in my face, and would not hear me. I felt quite hurt at this triumph of malice; but Harriet is more reaſonable, and is ſo happy to have her good opinion of Mr. Ewer confirmed, inſtead of diminiſhed by this adventure, that ſhe is all ſpirits.

Saturday, Nov. 22.

Mr. Ewer came here betimes this morning, and was tolerably well received by the family. "My poor friends," ſaid he, addreſſing me, "think themſelves highly

honoured by your intention of viſiting them; they had many ſcruples on the ſcore of the meanneſs of their apartment; but when I explained the manner of thinking of the lady I meant to introduce, they all gave way to the wiſh of being acquainted with her. Have I ventured too far, madam, in giving them hopes of ſeeing you this morning, if the weather permitted?—It is fine: what ſay you?"—"I will fetch my cloak and be with you inſtantly," ſaid I; "Miſs Harriet will go with me I know.—"I believe not," ſaid her aunt; "I can't hinder you, ma'am, from doing as you pleaſe; but I ſuppoſe my niece won't go to fetch the ſmall-pox to me."

Mr. Ewer aſſured her, that we had no occaſion to paſs the houſe that had been contagious; "that *has* been, I ſay, madam," added he, "for I have the ſurgeon's authority to aſſert, that there is not now the ſmalleſt danger."

"Mayhap

"Mayhap ſo, ſir," anſwered ſhe;" but my daughters have a great deal of work to do in a little time, and I thinks the beſt Miſs Harriet can do is to help them, inſtead of ſpending her time in reading and running about the country.—"I promiſe to give you a week's work, Mrs. Peterſon," ſaid I, "for the few hours Miſs Harriet will loſe in bearing me company."—"You are very good, madam," was the anſwer, "but I don't chooſe my niece ſhould go about to ſee ſtrangers and people as nobody knows."

This deciſion ſettled the buſineſs at once, and left us nothing more to ſay. Mr. Ewer, ever delicate and conſiderate, was the firſt to propoſe that my viſit ſhould be deferred, and to offer to make my excuſes. I thanked him in a few words, but with my whole heart. Pray tell the ladies, with my beſt compliments, that the delay will be very ſhort. He

bowed as he went away, and assured me that I might depend upon him as the faithful interpreter of my sentiments.

I was bent upon paying my visit, Edward, and privately determined, though I went alone, to defer it no longer than till the afternoon (in spite of the shortness of the days and the length of the distance). I made a light dinner, and rose before the cloth was removed, calling upon Sappho to be my guard. Mr. Peterson inquired where I was going in such a hurry. I said for a walk. "What, all alone, Mrs. Willars? don't Harriet or one of the girls go with you?" His wife answered, that they were all busy. "Well," said he, "if you are going my way, and will stop a bit, I don't know but I may go with you myself." I thanked him as this great civility deserved, and, followed by poor Harriet's eyes and wishes, set out alone. I walked fast, and obtained the object I had in view without

without accident or difficulty. I knocked the firſt time at a wrong door; the good old woman of the houſe ſent a child to ſhew me to Dame Jenkins's. I inquired after the ſtrangers, and deſired the perſon who opened the door to me, to inform Mrs. Larimer that the lady Mr. Ewer had mentioned to her was come. Shew the lady in, Lucy, ſaid a voice I gueſſed to be Mrs. Larimer's, and in the ſame inſtant her daughter appeared. I followed her, and introduced myſelf as well as I could. We were a little awkward at firſt; but ſoon became acquainted, and diſcourſed unreſervedly of their affairs; both of them expreſſing the deepeſt ſenſe of the kindneſs of my viſit. I meant to have been a very rigid obſerver of their deportment, but was ſoon aſhamed of having conceived ſuch a deſign. Prejudice itſelf, in company of theſe ladies, muſt yield to pity and reſpect; it is not poſſible to hear and ſee them, and

to harbour a doubt either of their innocence or their diſtreſs.

Mrs. Larimer, whom I take to be about ſixty, is extremely fair, and has very fine features, with a placid reſigned kind of expreſſion in them exquiſitely intereſting; her daughter is tall and well made, but not handſome; her countenance bears the deepeſt impreſſion of melancholy; ſhe has been ſo long the confidant and partaker of her mother's ſorrows, that ſhe has almoſt forgotten to ſmile. I had, however, the ſatisfaction of adminiſtering comfort to them both. They ſpoke in the higheſt terms of Mr. Ewer, as the moſt worthy, friendly, and generous of men. "My ſon was never ſo happy as with him," ſaid Mrs. Larimer, "when he went to ſettle at Briſtol; the poor youth loſt his better angel; he took to bad company, and Mr. Ewer made, as I have heard, an unfortunate marriage;

riage; I am ignorant of the particulars; but what the woman muſt be whom he could not make happy, and even virtuous, I am at a loſs to think; I can feel for him more than another, perhaps, for our lots are ſomething ſimilar; he is a voluntary exile from a bad wife; I, an involuntary one from a faithleſs huſband; and here we meet ſo unexpectedly, ſo many miles from home, as if Providence had ordained it to ſave us from periſhing."

I wept while Mrs. Larimer ſpoke thus; ſhe preſſed my hand. O! honey, my dear, (ſhe has a little Iriſh accent, exceſſively agreeable,) may your tears never flow but for others. I wiſhed to introduce the ſubject of the lace, and, while I was conſidering how to manage it, Miſs Larimer furniſhed me the opportunity, by ſaying ſhe had been at Mr. Peterſon's once. "I was very unlucky, madam," ſaid ſhe, "in not meeting with you; yet, perhaps, knowing

nothing at all of me ——" ſhe heſitated. I then related to her the intereſt with which ſhe had inſpired me; the pains Miſs Peterſon and I (you know Harriet's name is Peterſon,) had taken to find her out, and the remorſe we had felt at the inſignificant price ſhe had been paid for the lace." "We wiſhed very much to make reſtitution, madam," continued I, "and were extremely concerned at not finding the opportunity, but it is not too late." I had previouſly wrapt two guineas in a piece of paper, and as I ſaid this, laid it on the table. Mrs. Larimer took up the paper and opened it. "I ſuſpected this, madam," ſaid ſhe; "but reſtitution, as you are pleaſed to call your preſent, ſhould not exceed the firſt demand. Lucy offered her lace for a guinea; I cannot accept of more." I inſiſted that it was not paid for, even with what I had taken the liberty to offer, and at length, after much argument, prevailed upon them to accept it.

"Take

" Take it, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Larimer to her daughter; " obligations to ſuch people as Mrs. Willars are not oppreſſive; ſhe knows we are in want; why ſhould we be averſe to acknowledge it? It is not through any fault of ours; we have ſtill that reflection to conſole us."

I had made my firſt viſit rather long; the evening was now coming on; I took a reluctant leave; but Miſs Larimer inſiſted upon conducting me part of the way.— " You muſt not go ſo far alone," ſaid ſhe, " allow me to eſcort you; it will be prolonging the pleaſure I have in your company." I had much ado to prevail on her to return when ſomething more than half way. " I have loſt my fears and delicacies," ſaid ſhe, with my fortune; time was I could not have gone ſo far alone, in an evening, for any temptation; but now I am ſo often obliged to it, I have walked ſeveral times to M—— and back again

without reſting; (M. is near five miles from their abode;) once I ſhould have thought it impoſſible."

Could I have pleaſed myſelf, Edward, I ſhould have brought this intereſting young woman all the way home with me, have kept her to tea, and then ſent a ſervant back with her; but having no pretence to take ſuch a liberty at Mr. Peterſon's, I bade her a reluctant adieu. It was duſk when I reached home; Harriet was waiting for me at the door. "My aunt is ſo croſs," ſaid ſhe, "I dare not come to meet you, and your ſtay made me quite uneaſy; the tea was ordered ſooner than uſual, I verily believe, on purpoſe." When I entered the parlour, Mrs. Peterſon ſuppoſed, by my ſtaying ſo late, that I had taken tea with my new acquaintance; in return, I choſe to ſuppoſe that ſhe had ſent a ſervant to meet me, an attention which common civility, or rather common humanity would

would have dictated.—"Indeed," ſaid ſhe, I concluded that Mr. Ewer would have ſeen you home." A little nettled at this ſpeech, I anſwered ſharply, that I was ſure ſhe knew to the contrary.

As this was the firſt time, ſince my being here, that I have ever raiſed my voice above its uſual key, ſhe inſtantly lowered hers, and offered to make tea for me. I refuſed, and withdrew to my apartment. Harriet was ſpeedily diſpatched after me; her gentleneſs eaſily prevailed over my ill humour, but I judged it proper to appear to keep it up a little longer, for it is not with ſuch tempers as Mrs. Peterſon's that one ſhould relax too ſoon. "No perſon here can accuſe me of being troubleſome or encroaching," ſaid I to Harriet, "but if your aunt does not think me worth the common attentions due to every one, I ſhall ſpeedily remove my quarters." This made poor Harriet weep. "Thoſe tears

are highly flattering to me," said I to her, "and would make me put up with a thousand unpleasant things rather than give occasion for them; but I believe a little hint to your aunt—who likes the money she receives for my board, however she may dislike me—that it is possible I might be provoked to seek another situation, would not be amiss."

"My aunt is narrow minded and uninformed, as you know," said Harriet, "but I am sure she does you all the justice she is capable of. I know it falls far short of what you deserve, but you are too good and too generous not to make allowances for defects she cannot correct." Here Miss Anne interrupted us. "Mama begs to know if you will have any tea sent you; but what is the matter with Harriet?"—"Miss Harriet is so good as to shed tears," said I, "only because I talked of seeking another situation." This was enough,

away

away flew Miſs Anne with the intelligence, and its effect was inſtantaneous. I ſuffered myſelf to be prevailed on by repeated entreaties to go down to ſupper, and ſince the evening of my arrival here, have not been treated with ſo much attention. Theſe are trifles, my dear Edward; I do not mention them as ſerious grievances. Sweet, good night. I have been two days writing this; this is Sunday the 23d.

Monday, Nov. 24.

Mrs. Peterſon and her daughters are gone to ſee the houſe that Mr. Bertram is fitting up for his bride. I was invited to be of the party, but declined it, as I think it probable Miſs Larimer may return my viſit to-day, and I would not on any account be from home. In the days of her proſperity I might

I might have done ſo without ſcruple, but it is not now the time.

Miſs Peterſon was complaining laſt night of the weather, and wiſhing very devoutly for ſpring; her mother agreed with her, adding, what a pity it was that fine weather ſhould ever do any harm, and that it could not be ſummer always: they both appealed to me. I ſaid what was very true, that it never happened to me to wiſh any one ſeaſon of the year ſhortened; that I believed the ſucceſſion of one to the other added greatly to our enjoyment of them; and that I never was leſs happy in winter than in ſummer; I rather thought I was even more comfortable. The idea ran in my head, and I have turned it into rhyme.

WINTER.

What tho' for thee no warbler ſings,
What tho' for thee no zephyrs blow?
What tho' for thee no vi'let ſprings,
Nor chaplets bind thy hoary brow?

Yet

Yet I will bid thee welcome ſtill,
To me no hateful dreaded gueſt;
Boaſt Spring or Summer as they will,—
Each owes to Winter half its zeſt.

Tho' rarely ſmile thy ſternneſs move,
Tho' thy dread voice the echoes rend;
This ſeeming harſhneſs ſtill can prove
The wholeſome rigour of a friend.

Thy hand my ſinews well can brace;
Light is my heart, my ſpirits gay;
With glowing cheek and quicken'd pace,
Untir'd thro' rugged paths I ſtray.

What tho' no tender foliage deck
The rifled grove in vivid green?
Yet oft deſcried, thro' many a break,
The diſtant landſcape ſmiles between.

The whirring covies near me riſe,
The timid hares my footways croſs,
And ſquirrels, with their ſloe black eyes,
Peep from their canopies of moſs.

Fear not, ye tender, tim'rous race,
The harmleſs witneſs of your play
Ne'er would abridge your ſhort liv'd ſpace,
Ne'er ſhall your ſecret haunts betray.

For

For leſſer tenants of the grove,
A ſmall repaſt my hand ſhall deal,
And ſtrew, as penſively I rove,
The robin's and the ſparrow's meal.

Oft too ſome child of want ſevere,
Mocking with haws his thirſty lip,
Steals from mine eye the ready tear,
And takes the offerings of my ſcrip.

Then with light ſtep and hunger keen,
Back to my rural home I haſte,
And find, untainted with the ſpleen,
My ſober meal a rich repaſt.

With food enliven'd, not oppreſt,
When friendly chat begins to fail,
I take the author, I love beſt,
And then my nobler mind regale.

And as ſtill ev'ning cloſes in,
With hearts united, cares at reſt,
Tho' dark without, 'tis gay within;
We find no winter in the breaſt.

Tuesday, Nov. 25.

The morning of yeſterday was thick and unpleaſant; yet I was not diſappointed in my expectations. Miſs Larimer came, ſupporting on her arm her venerable parent, who exerted herſelf much beyond her ſtrength to pay me this mark of reſpect. I ſhould have received my viſitors in my own apartment, although the parlour was at liberty; but would not propoſe to Mrs. Larimer to climb the ſtaircaſe after a walk ſo fatiguing for her. "I have exerted myſelf, madam," ſaid ſhe, "to prove the ſenſe I have of your kindneſs; 'tis all the return I have in my power to make." I requeſted to be permitted to introduce my young friend, and Harriet made her appearance. Sure to prepoſſeſs in her favour all who have ſenſe and diſcernment, ſhe could not fail here; the approbation was indeed mutual. "This ſweet young lady is

is ſhortly to be married, I believe," ſaid Mrs. Larimer.—"It is her couſin, madam," I anſwered; "Miſs Harriet is cruel, and will not give any encouragement to her ſuitors."—"She is right not to decide too haſtily," ſaid the old lady, "an ill-ſorted marriage is a terrible thing. It is far better to live ſingle, at the riſk of being called an old maid; believe me, young lady; however, ſince this is not the deſtined bride, we ſhall be more at liberty to talk of a little ſcheme which Lucy and I have been planning. Shew the ear-rings, my dear." Miſs Larimer then produced a pair of gold ear-rings of very elegant taſte. "Lucy has long preſerved theſe unneceſſary baubles," ſaid Mrs. L. from regard to the donor; they were the gift of her brother, who brought them from Paris; they were then the neweſt taſte there, and I do not think are unfaſhionable even now; if it ſuits

Miſs

Miſs Peterſon to purchaſe them, ſhe ſhall have them at half the coſt price?"

Harriet obſerved, that ſhe had ſeen Lady M. G. at the ball at M——, with a pair of the ſame kind, but far leſs elegant. A thought ſtruck me; I ſaid I would venture to conclude the bargain, as I was ſure it would be approved. Harriet looked afraid; I made her a ſign to be ſilent, and deſired the ladies to name their price. Miſs Larimer ſaid they coſt three guineas, and ſhe conceived might be worth about half the ſum. "I am ſure they are cheap at two," ſaid I, "and will take them at that price. Harriet looked aghaſt; I was however determined; I took the ear-rings and paid the money. I have ſettled how to diſpoſe of them, and am ſure they are cheap. We forced our gueſts to take ſome refreſhment, of which they were much in want; while they were taking it, Mr. Ewer arrived. He had been to viſit his friends,

friends, and, not finding them, was at no loſs where to ſeek them; as they had told him, on Sunday, of my viſit, and of their intention of returning it the firſt fair day. He brought a letter from his correſpondent, who, as yet, has not been able to trace Mr. Larimer; but is indefatigable in his inquiries. He ſays there is reaſon to believe he is retired to Ireland, where he ſhall endeavour to find him out. Mrs. Larimer ſighed deeply, as ſhe thanked Mr. Ewer. "I know not," ſaid ſhe, "if ſucceſs in diſcovering my huſband's retreat would avail me any thing; however, I will endeavour to hope the beſt. I am ſecured by your kindneſs, and that of Mrs. Willars, from immediate want, and will truſt to Providence for the reſt."

There is a poor neglected pianoforte in the parlour, upon which Miſs Peterſons ſometimes ſtrum the very few airs they learnt at ſchool. Mr. Ewer opened it. "Has

"Has Miſs Larimer," ſaid he, "quite laid aſide her agreeable talent, or will ſhe favour us with a little ſpecimen of her ſkill?—"Alas!" ſaid ſhe, "I have long hung my harp upon the willows; but if I could hope to give the ſmalleſt entertainment, I would certainly do my beſt." Harriet and I joined in the intreaty, and ſhe played a ſonata with prodigious execution, though ſhe pleaded want of practice. She had the beſt maſters in all polite accompliſhments, as Mr. Ewer informed us, and excelled in moſt. It was a ſore mortification to me, my dear Edward, that I could not detain theſe ladies the whole day, or even to dinner. About one o'clock they left us, Mr. Ewer ſupporting the mother, whoſe ill ability to perform ſuch a work, even ſo aſſiſted, made my heart bleed to ſee her attempt it. Adieu.

Wednesday,

Wednesday, Nov. 26.

Our ladies returned yeſterday to dinner, very full of ſpirits, and highly delighted with the place they had been to ſee. The lover deſired that Miſs Peterſon would give orders for any alteration ſhe might fancy, and that he would take care they ſhould be punctually obeyed. According to her own account ſhe was not ſparing of them; the houſe and garden muſt be turned inſide out to pleaſe her. Yet it appears that it was merely to try him and ſhew her power, that ſhe was ſo difficult, for ſhe allowed that every thing was very complete and convenient; "but it will be better as I ſaid, won't it, mama?" added ſhe. In the afternoon I introduced the ear-rings; every one admired them. I ſaid they were Miſs Larimer's, and that ſhe wiſhed to diſpoſe of them. What was the price? when I anſwered two guineas, Mrs. Peterſon,

who was admiring them in her hands, replied with emphasis, "Two guineas!" and immediately laid them down. "I'll engage," said I, "that you don't match them in London for four."—"Two guineas is too dear," said the bride elect; "but if Miss Larimer would take one,"——"It is not I that would offer it, madam," I answered, "because I am persuaded they weigh much more."—"I should like to be sure of that," returned she; "let me send them to M—— to be weighed, or I'll shew them to Mr. Bertram when he comes in the evening."

I had bought the ear-rings, Edward, in the design of making them a bridal present to Miss P.; but, I own to you, this hard dealing with people in distress, of whose distress too they had already profited, almost put it by. If the lover will purchase them, he shall even have all the honour to himself; if not, I'll present them myself; for some-

thing

thing I muſt give, and it would ſorely puniſh me if I were not ſerving theſe worthy people at the ſame time; beſides, I have a purpoſe to ſerve; I hope to mollify the family in behalf of my unfortunate friends, and procure for them, all I can hope to procure, a little civility. I know the arguments likely to prevail here, and the road to Mrs. Peterſon's heart. But you, Edward, who are acquainted with my ſlender finances—, methinks I hear you ſay, whence all theſe guineas, my Sophy? In truth, I am nearly as rich as when you gave me, at parting, almoſt all your wealth. My board is my only expence here; my toilette, as yet, has coſt me nothing: thus I find the means of being ſo magnificent; thanks to retirement and economy.

Thursday,

Thursday, Nov. 27.

Mr. Bertram ſpent the evening of yeſterday here, as was expected; his miſtreſs did not fail to produce the ear-rings, and to expreſs pretty clearly her deſire of having them. She praiſed their elegance, lightneſs, and cheapneſs, and was well ſupported by her mother and ſiſter. Mr. Bertram admired them too, till he heard the price, and diſcovered that he was expected to pay it; he then ran them down moſt unmercifully; they were clumſy and old faſhioned; the picture of Mr. Altenden's great grandmother in the gallery had juſt ſuch; in ſhort, they did not look like gold, and he was ſure were unbecoming. In vain did Miſs Peterſon put them in her ears, and with the ſweeteſt ſmile her pretty features could aſſume, aſk him how ſhe looked? the ſwain was invulnerable, and ſaid, ſhe did not look well at all.

" I am ſorry," ſaid I, " they do not hit Mr. Bertram's fancy, for I intended to have requeſted Miſs Peterſon's acceptance of them as a memorial of me; but as he does not approve of them, I muſt give up the pleaſure I propoſed myſelf."—" Indeed," ſaid Miſs Peterſon, " I don't care whether he likes them or not; for my part I like them extremely. I accept them with pleaſure, and will always keep them for your ſake, Mrs. Willars; I am exceſſively obliged to you for ſuch a handſome preſent."

Mrs. Peterſon was likewiſe extremely pleaſed, and very thankful; and Mr. Bertram, deſiring the lady to let him look at her again, (ſhe was turned towards the glaſs) began to think they became her very much. " But you have ſo little occaſion for ſuch things, Charlotte," ſaid he, " to ſet you off—with diamond eyes what ſignifies gold ear-rings?"

This

This compliment disarmed the fair ones resentment for the little gallantry he had shewn on the occasion. I was not the least pleased of the party, for I had very soon occasion to observe that my present was productive of the happiest effects. Mrs. Peterson immediately after questioned me relative to Mrs. Larimer's affairs, with an air of interest, interrupting me occasionally, to express her compassion by such exclamations as, poor things! what a pity! lack-a-day—and so forth.

"She was sorry," she said, "to have been from home when they came; she would have given them a bit of dinner with all her heart; she dared to say they wanted it bad enough, poor things! Harriet might go with me to see them whenever I liked—she had no objection to her visiting people of good character, though they were a little down in the world."

I ſhall avail myſelf, with great pleaſure, of this indulgence; indeed, I never laid out a ſmall ſum ſo much to my ſatisfaction. I felt, it is true, ſome little reluctance at depriving Miſs Larimer of the laſt gift of her beloved brother. Yet I foreſaw ſo many good effects from the purchaſe—I was willing, too, to make atonement for the little flight of ill-humour into which I ſuffered myſelf to be betrayed the other evening. Thus we all ſeek our own ends, and are egotiſts in a manner more or leſs refined; even thoſe who, in the mirror of ſelf-complacency, are apt to fancy themſelves the moſt diſintereſted.

Friday, Nov. 28.

After ſeveral days of exceeding bad weather, this morning proving tolerable, I availed

availed myſelf of it, and of the permiſſion granted to Harriet to take her with me, to inform ourſelves how poor Mrs. Larimer had borne the fatigue of her walk. We ſet off on our ſcheme immediately after breakfaſt: in the way I was lamenting the inconvenience of being ſo diſtant from a town, or any place where we might have procured wherewithal to have furniſhed a ſmall baſket, which Miſs Larimer had left behind her, when ſhe called firſt at Southlands, and while we were returning empty. Harriet recollected that her aunt ſometimes bought fowls at a farm houſe, which was almoſt in our road. We called there, and purchaſed a fine young one, with a few eggs and a little pat of butter, and, thus provided, ſat out with better ſpirits.

We found Mrs. Larimer in bed, and much indiſpoſed. Her long walk had, as I feared, overpowered her. On this account we ſhortened our viſit. Miſs Larimer

recollected her baſket. "It was a ſad loſs to me," ſaid ſhe; "but, oh dear, how you have filled it! I am quite confounded at your goodneſs, though I will not deny that this inſtance of it is very opportune. My poor mother has ſo little appetite, and ſo little to tempt her appetite, ſhe may, perhaps, fancy a bit of fowl. Yeſterday Mr. Ewer brought us ſome wine; what good friends has Providence ſent us!" I wiſh it were poſſible to procure theſe ladies a more decent habitation, and nearer to us: it will be miſerably uncomfortable as the winter advances.

We talked over this ſcheme in our way home, but could think of nothing. Mr. Ewer came in the evening, and we conſulted with him. "I have been thinking of it too, ladies," ſaid he; "it will be death to Mrs. Larimer to remain on a damp ground floor; if nothing better can be done, I'll change with them; but as that would not bring

bring them nearer to you, it would but be half our point gained. I ſhall therefore look further before I make ſuch a propoſal."

Sunday, Nov. 30.

Yeſterday was devoted to needle work in the ſervice of Miſs Peterſon; I joined the party, and did not even allow myſelf a quarter of an hour's converſe with my Edward; thoſe for whom I was employed did not know the merit of the ſacrifice—I ſhall pay it off hereafter.

We have been with Mr. Ewer to-day, to ſee an apartment he has diſcovered for the Larimers; it is at the houſe, or cottage, if you pleaſe, of Mrs. Hall, our chair-woman. She has four rooms, two on the ground floor, and two up ſtairs. She has agreed

to let the upper ones, in one of which there is a fire-place, and to wait upon the ladies, when ſhe is not otherwiſe engaged, at half a crown a week: it is half way nearer to us, and in every reſpect they will be better accommodated.

Monday 31.

I am in high favour with both maſter and miſtreſs, as you will judge, when I inform you that I this morning obtained the chaiſe, Harriet, and a lad, to conduct us to M—, whither I wanted to go to procure what remained to make the new abode, deſtined for the Larimers, comfortable.

We firſt viſited the cottage; and having made out a liſt of deficiencies, purſued our courſe to M—, where we readily ſupplied them.—

them.—We added a ſmall proviſion of tea, ſugar, wine, and brandy; and having procured a cart to convey ſome furniture, haſtened back to ſee every thing put in order.

We found Mr. Ewer preſiding at the building of a ſtack of wood, which he had purchaſed, ready chopt, in little ſnug pieces, fit for the uſe of ſuch a ſmall family. We left him at his employment, having finiſhed ours firſt, though it took up ſome time. Harriet ſettled the bedroom; I the parlour; and, I aſſure you, we both acquitted ourſelves very well.

We arrived home rather late, and ſomewhat tired, with hearts well ſatisfied, tho' with empty ſtomachs, for we had had no time to think of dinner.—A diſh of good tea, and ſome toaſt, to which we did great honour, has ſet us all to rights again.

Adieu—I go to my repoſe. Our friends take poſſeſſion to-morrow.

Tuesday, December 1.

Mr. Ewer called this evening to acquaint us, that he had ſeen our friends ſafe to their new apartment. He procured a little covered cart of his landlord, and went himſelf to drive them in it.

Poor Mrs. Larimer was extremely pleaſed with the change: ſhe quite exhauſted herſelf in expreſſions of acknowledgement; and Mr. Ewer ſays quite confounded *him*. "While ſhe extolled the neatneſs of the place," ſaid he, "I could not forbear thinking of that where I formerly knew her the miſtreſs, nor ſcarce refrain from tears

tears at the compariſon. How many diſtreſſed perſons have I known her relieve! and now ſhe is reduced to accept relief herſelf; and is ſo thankful, while ſo deſerving of it: but a generous mind is always a grateful one."—"I dare ſay the obſervation is juſt," ſaid Harriet, "though it appears very contradictory; for it ſhould ſeem, that perſons who are very ready to do ſervice, would not rate it ſo high when received." "So it ſhould ſeem, indeed, Miſs Harriet," ſaid Mr. Ewer; "yet the contrary is moſt certainly true; for the plain reaſon, that generoſity and gratitude are both fruits of the ſame kind ſoil—a warm and diſintereſted heart, which never thinks it can do enough for others, nor ſufficiently repay what others do for it.—Have you never had occaſion to remark, that the perſons who are moſt incroaching and troubleſome, are preciſely thoſe who will not put up with the ſmalleſt inconvenience themſelves; and *vice verſa*, that

thoſe who willingly incommode themſelves continually to oblige, are ever timorouſly apprehenſive of being troubleſome. This ſeems a contradiction too, Miſs Harriet; for did we always judge of others by ourſelves, the unaccommodating would avoid giving trouble, from the conſciouſneſs that they themſelves are unable to bear it: and the good-natured man would be continually ſoliciting ſervices of his friends, from an idea, that what affords him ſo much pleaſure, an opportunity of obliging, could not poſſibly be offenſive to any one elſe. Yet the reverſe of this is the fact; diſintereſted people are never importune—the ſelfiſh always ſo; becauſe, Miſs Harriet, your own heart will beſt convince you, that the ſame good nature which diſpoſes you to be ever ready to oblige, renders you alſo fearful of offending; which one of a contrary caſt, provided its little ſelfiſh turn is ſerved, is

as

as careleſs of giving trouble, as it is ill-diſpoſed to ſuffer any."

Wednesday, Dec. 2.

Another month, not a little but a long month, is paſt, and yet no tidings of my Edward. Alas! my love, haſt thou forgotten me? The wind has blown hard all night—I reſted ill, and roſe early: the morning was clear for the ſeaſon. I ſtrolled to a ſheltered grove that joins to the garden, my favourite haunt when I am melancholy: it is well ſtocked with ſad evergreens.

Sacred to Edward is this grove;
Where, from intruſion free,
All penſive and alone I rove,
To muſe—and think of thee.

The

The widow'd turtle here retreats,
And pours the plaintive moan;
No faithful part'ner now repeats,
But Echos ſad alone.

Here the dark yew and cypreſs wear
The livery of grief;
And trees in Summer gay and fair
Are ſtript of ev'ry leaf.

Thro' the ſpoil'd boughs the wind complains,
In murmurs deep and low;
As tho' in pity to our pains,
It would reſponſive blow.

Sacred to Edward be this grove!
Where from intruſion free,
All mournful and alone I rove,
And ſigh, and think of thee!

Thursday 3.

We have had a great buſtle in the family to-day, which led to the diſcovery I am going to relate. Hannah, the dairy-maid, being about ſome buſineſs in the kitchen, ſuddenly complained of ſickneſs, and fainted away.

As ſhe is a ſtout healthy girl, by no means ſubject to ſuch delicacies, her miſtreſs, who was preſent, queſtioned her, upon her recovery, pretty cloſely as to the cauſe. Hannah proteſted ſhe could not account for it at all; but as ſhe had been unlaced during her fit, when ſhe roſe to dreſs herſelf, and would have ſtooped to pick up ſome article of her apparel that had fallen, the cauſe, unfortunately for her, became very apparent. "Why, Hannah, you are with child?" ſaid her miſtreſs."

treſs." Hannah denied the fact, proteſting it was impoſſible. Mrs. Peterſon turned her about—" 'Tis of no uſe to deny it, Hannah; as ſure as ever I was with child myſelf, you are ſo now."

Hannah wept and raved—her miſtreſs ſcolded; and the noiſe became ſo great, that the family flocked, from all quarters, to know what was the matter. " Tell me who has abuſed you, you naſty ſtrumpit—and turn out of my houſe directly, or I'll ſend you before the juſtice." Hannah now ſobbed out, that if ſhe was with child, 'twas by Mr. Thomas, and nobody elſe. " Why, you wicked wretch," ſaid the miſtreſs, " you would not have the face to lay your baſtard to my poor boy?—Get out of my houſe this inſtant." The girl ſaid if ſhe was turned away, ſhe would inſtantly go and ſwear the child, and the family would find they muſt keep it, and her too. Miſs

Peterſon here joined in invective with her mother; but her ſiſter was ſilent, and as pale as death.

In the height of the uproar arrived Mr. Thomas; he looked very ſmall when he heard the cauſe of it. His mother would fain have perſuaded him that he was falſely accuſed; but Hannah would be heard too: —"You knows, Mr. Thomas, you promiſed me marriage before I'd conſent to you; and you knows as how, 'twas you that uſed to come 'anight acroſs the paſſage to my room, and frought the ladies ſo. When Molly Cook faſtened the door with her penknife, ſo as you could'nt get in, you knows you took the jack chain, and went and groaned under the window: and did'nt you laugh the next day, and tell me as how you had cured the wenches of ſpoiling ſport; and ſince you had been in the room next the ladies, did'nt you pretend that John Fogger muſt call you up

up of a morning, ſo as they might'nt be frought when they heard you."

You are to obſerve, Edward, that this girl, who is obliged to riſe early to milk her cows, has a room to herſelf on the other ſide of the paſſage, where the men ſervants could call her betimes, without diſturbing the family: the other maids, as I believe I have ſaid, are lodged on the ſecond floor nearer their miſtreſſes. Thus, you ſee, the adventure of the ghoſt is very clearly, if not ſatisfactorily, explained.

Mr. Thomas was ſtruck dumb with all this detail of circumſtances: his mother, however, found her tongue to ſome purpoſe; and gave it him, as the phraſe is, on both ſides of his ears. He ſtood for ſome time with his hands in his pockets, whiſtling with an air of unconcern; but the ſtorm increaſing, he was driven from his *ſans froid*, and the field, at the ſame time, ſwearing

ſwearing he would not return till all the wimon volk had their tongues cut out.

I was not preſent at this ſcene—Harriet gave me theſe particulars; ſhe was eager to inform me of the laying of the ghoſt, which you find portended a birth inſtead of a death.

I underſtand, this evening, that matters are a little appeaſed: the girl, who ſays ſhe has ſtill three months of her time to go, is allowed to ſtay one more here.—Mr. Peterſon gives ſecurity to the pariſh for his ſon; Harriet is returned to her apartment; and every thing goes on as before, except that Mrs. Peterſon has by no means recovered her good humour. The circumſtance is certainly not a pleaſant one; and were ſhe never ruffled but with ſuch juſt cauſe, I could hardly blame her frequent violence.

We

We have been at Mrs. Larimer's, and found her and her daughter ſettled and quite comfortable. The latter was writing to her father, though ſhe knows not where to addreſs him—of courſe we ſhortened our viſit.

Friday 4.

Mr. Ewer has a correſpondence with an emigrant French Abbé, a man of merit, for whom he poſſeſſes great regard. He was a wanderer by choice, before he was compelled to be ſo from neceſſity. As he has travelled ſo much, and with fruit, his letters are always amuſing; and Mr. Ewer frequently entertains us with paſſages from them. He ſometimes ſends poetry, in the compoſition of which he diverts his anxiety. The following elegy, on his ſeparation from a beloved

a beloved ſiſter, will give you a ſpecimen of his abilities.

Harriet and I have exerciſed our wits in a tranſlation, and now it is done. We are ſorry we did not attempt it in the ſame kind of metre as the original, which, we think, would have leſſened the difficulty.

ELEGIE.

Si d'un heureux Hymen, j'ignorois les faveurs,
De la tendre amitie je connois les douceurs.
Le perfide flambeau de l'enfant d'Idalie,
Ne guida pas mon cœur dans le choix d'une amie;
La nature pour moi la forma de mon ſang,
Et ſçut me l'indiquer par cet attrait puiſſant
Qui, ne trompant jamais, quand il eſt ſon ouvrage,
Devroit toujours fixer le cœur d'un homme ſage.
Je trouvois, dans ma ſœur, ce que ſans l'eſperer,
Pour une epouſe, au ciel j'aurois pu demander!
Des grâces, de l'eſprit; point de coquetterie;
Point de pretention; raiſon ſans pruderie;
Vertu ſans apreté, décence ſans humeur
Amitié ſans foibleſſe, égalité, douceur.

Déja depuis long-temps, Lachesis étonnée,
Ourdissoit de nos jours l'heureuse destinée,
A l'abri des besoins, à l'abri des désirs,
Nous goûtions en paix, les tranquilles plaisirs
Que le vice jalouse, et jamais ne dispense,
Dont jamais le remords n'a troublé l'innocence,
Plus favorable encore à nos modestes vœux,
Un avenîr riant égayoit a nos yeux,
Par l'éclat séducteur des dons de la fortune;
De l'hyver de nos ans la pensee importune.

La discorde, ce monstre ennemi des humains,
Armant de son poignard leurs homicides mains,
Me fait abandonner mon état, ma pàtrie,
Ma fortune, mes biens, la moitié de ma vie ;
Je le vois aujourdhui, jamais je n'eûs tenté,
De conserver, hélas ! ce qui m'en est resté,
Si d'un retour prochain, le consolant présage,
N'eût trompé ma tendresse, réanime mon courage,
Heureusement encore la même illusion,
Adoucit les rigueurs de l'émigration.

Lorsque de l'Aquilon l'haleine impérieuse,
Arrête des torrents la marche impétueuse,
De ses sillons glacés chasse le laboureur,
Oblige au répentir l'imprudent voyageur,

Et

Et ſuſpendant le cours des fureurs de la guerre,
Du deuil de la nature a conſolé la terre,
Il me ſemble toujours que las de leurs forfaits,
Les peuples détrompés vont invoquer la paix.

Si lorſque de Zephyr, l'amoureuſe campagne,
Des tréſors de ſon ſein enrichit les campagnes,
Et de la volupté parfumant les autels
Au plaiſir, au bonheur invite les mortels,
Je les vois animés d'une nouvelle rage,
Voler de toutes parts au ſignal du carnage,
Je dis, de la fureur c'eſt le dernier effort,
Peut-être qu'à-coté des cyprès de la mort,
L'olivier de la paix, s'élevant en ſilence,
Va bientôt des ſoldats déſarmer la vengeance.

Ceſt ainſi que prenant le deſir pour l'eſpoir
Malgré moi, je conſens, à vivre ſans te voir,
O trop aimable ſoeur, oh ma chère Modeſte,
Mais j'en jure par toi, par tout ce qui me reſte,
Avant que le ſoleil cédant à ſes amours,
En faveur de Thetis, ait abrégé les jours,
Tu me ſeras rendue, ou pour jamais ravie,
Loin de ce que l'on aime, hé ! qu' importe la vie ?
Je vais dire aux cruels qui nous ont ſéparés,
Je me ſoumets aux loix, vous les reſpecterez.

Je

Je pourrois concentrer ou fond du ſanctuaire,
Ou ne peut pénétrer qu'un oiel trop téméraire,
Et mon culte et ma foi; je puis adorer Dieu
Sans temple, et ſans autels, je le vois en tout lieu;
Mais mon cœur veut preſſer l'objet de ſa tendreſſe,
Ceſt un beſoin qui n'aît et qui renaît ſans ceſſe,
Pour moi ſi violent que s'il n'eſt ſatisfait,
La vie eſt un tourment, et la mort un bienfait.

TRANSLATION.

If Hymen's ſacred torch ne'er blaz'd for me,
Denied a conſort's tender cares to prove;
Yet bleſt in friendſhip's moſt ſublime degree,
I ſhar'd a virtuous ſiſter's blameleſs love.

'Twas not Idalia's boy, perverſe and blind,
My choice directed in its aim or end;
Nature in this to me ſupremely kind,
Form'd of my blood my eſtimable friend.

Oh! thus, had I beſought a ſpouſe of heav'n,
Thus gifted had I ask'd my choſen fair;
Unconſcious beauty, temper mild and even,
Such inoffenſive wit and ſenſe ſo rare.

Friendſhip thus free from all that could debaſe,
Such ſimple elegance devoid of art;
Such gentle dignity, unſtudied grace,
Decent reſerve, where prudery has no part.

Shelter'd alike from want and vain deſires,
In ſmooth ſucceſſion flow'd our happy hours;
The joys that virtuous innocence inſpires,
Vice envying, never can beſtow, were ours.

Yes, ye bleſt moments, ye did ſweetly flow,
Free from ſolicitude or anxious fears;
For fortune promis'd amply to beſtow
Her bounties on the winter of our years.

'Twas thus, alas! when erſt diſcordant hate,
Death-dealing daggers in each murth'rous hand,
Forc'd me to leave my home and tranquil ſtate,
And flee an exile from my native land!

Fond hope ſtill flattering, and ſtill untrue,
My ſad exiſtence urges to maintain;
With promiſes of quick return in view,
Deceiving ſtill, tho' ſtill experienc'd vain.

When the impetuous torrent on its way
Is check'd by Boreas' congealing breath,
The labourer leaves unturn'd the froſt-bound clay,
And nature ſuffers temporary death.

E'en then, the waſte of war conſtrain'd to ceaſe,
Humanity is chear'd, tho' nature mourn;
Ah! ſtill I've thought that, emulous of peace,
The nations would invoke her to return.

When Zephyr's am'rous bride profuſely ſhow'rs
Her bleſſings on the renovated earth;
And laviſh, ſtrewing fragrancy and flow'rs,
Mortals invites to harmony and mirth;

If ſtill the ſword of war I ſee them wage,
And madly hurry to the trumpet's call,
'Tis the laſt effort of expiring rage!
I fondly cry, and does portend its fall.

Perhaps the peaceful olive ſoon may give
Her ſhade, where late death's cypreſs budded forth;
'Tis thus my wiſhes ſtill with hopes deceive,
To drag a being ſpoil'd of all its worth.

But,

But, oh, my ſiſter! I to thee atteſt,
That e'er bright Phœbus, to his Thetis true,
Shortens his courſe with her at eve to reſt,
Thee I'll rejoin, or ever bid adieu.

I'll tell the more-leſs perſecuting crew,
I come not to infringe your ſtern beheſt;
My faith and worſhip I can ſtill purſue,
Hid in the cloſe receſſes of my breaſt.

My God is preſent ev'ry where the ſame,
In truth and ſpirit I may ſtill adore;
And of my heart a living altar frame,
Tho' with his praiſe his temples ring no more.

But ſever'd from a ſiſter's tender care,
No earthly pleaſure can her loſs ſupply;
Life is a burthen which conſtrain'd I bear,
And, oh! methinks it were a good to die.

December 5.

We ſhewed Mr. Ewer our tranſlation of his friend's elegy: he complimented it of courſe, and deſired leave to take a copy, which, he ſays, he ſhall convey to the author, who knows enough of Engliſh, (he civilly added,) to be highly flattered with the honour done his Muſe. This was ſome days ſince. Thurſday evening he brought us two more little pieces by the ſame hand.—The hiſtory of the firſt he gave us as follows.

The author being preſent at a literary academy in Italy, when the following queſtion was propoſed—"Why have women in general ſo little friendſhip for one another?" and where it was diſcuſſed before a numerous aſſembly of ladies, with little attention to their feelings; he the next day cauſed this little impromptu to be circulated;

culated; wherein, though he ſeems to take the fact for granted, he at leaſt accounts for it with wit and gallantry. You will find it annexed, with my tranſlation; for Harriet declared off the moment ſhe heard it. "The thought is pretty, I allow," ſaid ſhe; "but the author would have had much more merit, in my eye, in denying the aſſertion, than in attempting an apology for it—every body knows it is not true." "Every body that has the happineſs of knowing you and Mrs. Willars may," ſaid Mr. Ewer; "but ſuch friendſhips, as well as ladies, are very rare, and probably never came under my friend's obſervation; beſides, Miſs Harriet, you will recollect Waller's anſwer to Charles the Second, that poets ſucceed beſt in fiction:

"We bards, ſo heav'n and all the Nine decreed,
"In fiction better than in truth ſucceed."

They will all ſay with Prior—

"Odds life! muſt one ſwear to the truth of a ſong?"

"Rien n'eſt beau que le vrai, le ſeul vrai eſt aimable, Sir," returned Harriet. "I can quote poets, you ſee, as well as you." "Well, Mr. Ewer," ſaid I, "I undertake the translation—the thought pleaſes me: as for the ſatire implied, in admitting the academy's queſtion to be well founded,

"Let the gall'd jade wince;"

I do not feel at all affected by it."

Harriet ſtill inſiſted that I was to blame, to give up the cauſe of our own ſex; for admitting the compliment, ſaid ſhe, is admitting the cenſure, and both are equal-unfounded. "Both your opinion, and your warmth in aſſerting it, Madam," ſaid Mr. Ewer, "do honour to your underſtanding,

ſtanding, and the goodneſs of your heart; but when you have ſeen more of the world, you will find with concern, that the ſatire of which you complain, inſtead of being too general, is not general enough. The queſtion might have been thus expreſſed: "Why is real friendſhip ſo very ſeldom to be met with?" For whatever the academy of Cento, in its wiſdom, may decide, it is certainly not more common among men than women; on the contrary, I believe it to be a ſtill greater rarity; the fair ſex being in general, of the two, the moſt diſintereſted; and they are claſhing intereſts that are the rocks and quickſands of friendſhip. In ſhort, Miſs Harriet, all indiſcriminate cenſure thrown by one ſex upon the other, if at all founded, falls upon human nature in general: I don't think either ſex naturally more defective than the other. There are, believe me, tender, generous, noble, diſintereſted men; you well know there are ſuch women: but

each are ſo thinly ſcattered, ſo little known, ſo wide aſunder, that it is rare indeed, and ſingularly happy, when two ſuch characters meet in different ſexes as lovers, or in the ſame as friends. How often, alas! is a worthy confiding heart linked, by its own generous affections, and the fond perſuaſion that what it loves muſt needs be the ſame, to a groveling, ſelfiſh, mean, mercenary object, as incapable of repaying, as of deſerving its tenderneſs! However, ſince you will not exerciſe your talent on the anſwer to the academy, will you be more favourable to theſe lines, addreſſed to a lady who had been transformed, in ſome verſes inſcribed to her, to a ſtar? My friend ſays himſelf that they are the leaſt exceptionable of any thing he has attempted in this way: It is certain they have much point, and are very flowing. What ſay you?"

Harriet

Harriet anſwered, bluſhing, that ſhe would make the attempt, though ſhe utterly deſpaired of ſucceſs. She accordingly ſet about it the ſame evening, as ſoon as Mr. Ewer was gone. You ſhall judge of her performance, for I add the ſtanzas, and tranſlations; obſerving, however, that the French copy to the lady among the ſtars, is a ſecond edition, which Harriet did not ſee till after ſhe had completed her verſion of the firſt.—The line which was altered ſhall be added in a note.

We have been to Mrs. Larimer's this morning; the purport of our viſit was to engage them, at Mrs. Peterſon's deſire, to dine with us to-morrow. You may believe we readily undertook ſo agreeable a commiſſion, and that I bleſſed the lucky idea of the ear-rings. Mrs. Larimer's health now ſeems better than her daughter's; on long habit does not ſeem to familiariſe the latter to

and, I fear, ſhe will ſink under it; her mother hinted, to-day, at ſome particular diſappointment that Lucy had ſuſtained. Mr. Ewer has promiſed to explain it to us the firſt opportunity; in the mean time we do all that depends on us to beguile the ſorrows of both; each of them partake of our literary amuſements, for which the daughter, particularly, has both taſte and talents. We ſee them moſt days.

REPOSE A L'ACADEMIE.

Quand Dieu par un chef d'œuvre achevant ſon ouvrage,
De la femme innocente êut contemplé l'image,
Il craignit qu'elle meme, ſe voyant tant d'appas,
A l'homme mains heureux ne s'intireſſa pas;
Et voulut par un trait de ſageſſe admirable,
Qu'elle n'appreçut point ce qu'une autre a d'amiable,
Dans ce ſexe charmant ce n'eſt donc qu'une erreur
Qui devient pour nous la ſource du bonheur.
Ingrats, qui mechamment ozez en faire un vice,
Elle n'a pour vous punir qu'a ſe rendre juſtice.

TRANSLATION.

TRANSLATION.

When the Creator, in his pow'r diſplay'd,
Approving, had his laſt beſt work ſurvey'd,
Such winning grace in the fair creature ſhone,
That man, leſs favor'd lord, had ſigh'd alone;
But that, in pity to his wretched ſtate,
Heav'n to a partial blindneſs gave his mate,
And doom'd no woman, in her ſex ſhould prize
The charms clear-ſeeing man ſhould idolize.
No longer then as vice an error blame,
From whence we ev'ry joy and pleaſure claim;
To puniſh us, to humble to the duſt,
Woman need only to herſelf be juſt.

Vous changer en etoille, a parler ſans detours,
N'eſt point un compliment, mais bien une meprise,
On vous fait a la nuit preſider, belle Eliſe,
Tandis, que cette a vous, a faire les beaux jours.

*S'apres l'ordre etablis dans les celeſtes voutes,
Je ne vois pas pour vous de place au firmament,
Un aſtre y peut briller douze heures ſeulment,
Et vous durez pretendre a les embellir toutes!

* Firſt edition—Renonez ſans regret a ces celeſtes vailes.

TRANSLATION.

To change thee, fair Eliza, to a ſtar,
Is far leſs flatt'ring than perhaps deſign'd;
They make thee only rule by night, from far
Born to give pleaſant days to human kind.

Renounce a claim injurious to thy pow'rs,
Content to ſhine in our terreſtrial ball,
A ſtar can glitter but a few ſhort hours,
Whilſt thou, bright maid, has charms to gild them all.

Saturday, Dec. 6.

Mr. Ewer informs us, that the extraordinary gentleneſs of the animals in this country is a fact that ſtrikes the obſervation of all foreigners, particularly the French. They are aſtoniſhed to ſee,—what is ſo uſual here, that no one thinks of remarking it,—a fine ſh wy nag ſtanding with his bridle upon hi neck. waiting contentedly the return of his maſter from the poſt-office, perhaps,

or

or ſome other place of buſineſs, in a market town, never offering to move till he feels him on his back, then pricking up his ears, and diſplaying as much mettle and willingneſs to go, as he lately had ſhewn patience and docility to ſtand ſtill. They could not venture to leave a French horſe in this manner, *ſur ſa bonne foi*, as they call it.

In France, Mr. Ewer ſays, people are not at all delighted to meet a ſtrange dog in their walks; they are generally fierce, and not unfrequently mad. Even the domeſtic cat is leſs uſually familiar than here. He adds, likewiſe, contrary to the received opinion, that the winters in that country, except altogether in the ſouthern latitudes, are ſeverer; though ſhorter than with us, it generally freezes more intenſely and with leſs interruption. He relates effects of the ſevere winter of eighty-five, when he was in France, which I do not at all recollect to have happened here. Another unpleaſant

ſant thing in this climate is, the hail ſtorms, to which, in ſummer, it is ſo expoſed, and which uſually lay a whole tract of country waſte. A gentleman, who was of the late unfortunate monarch's body guard, was hunting with him once in the foreſt of Fontainbleau, as he himſelf related to Mr. Ewer, when they were ſurprized in ſo tremendous a hail ſtorm, that a ſtone which was brought to the king, at a farm houſe where he had taken ſhelter, being weighed by his order, was found to weigh above five pounds. This ſtorm cut off a number of trees in the foreſt, killed men and horſes, and did immenſe damage to the adjacent country. The droughts to which the country is ſubject are well known. You will wonder why I enter into theſe particulars, my Edward, but they are meant, in caſe you ſhould be ignorant of them, as notes explanatory and illuſtrative of the following Elegy, with which Mr. Ewer introduced them; it is the production

tion of a lady, who was related to him, and whoſe reſidence abroad was not, as you may perceive, altogether a matter of choice.

ELEGY.

Dear native Britain, can I e'er forget
Thy fertile paſtures, verdant thro' the year?
Thy ſmiling landſcapes muſt I not regret?
Thy cheriſh'd borders ever, ever dear?

Sear'd by the ſun of this too ſouthern coaſt,
For thy ſoft ſummer frequently I ſigh;
Chill'd by its long and unrelenting froſt,
How do I covet thy oft varying ſky!

Mild glows thy ſun, as timid virgins bluſh,
The toiling traveller can thy heats abide;
No ſtorms impetuous thy fair harveſts cruſh,
And ſcatter Dearth and Deſolation wide.

The hind laborious gaily binds his ſheaf,
The long oppreſſive day content to bear;
For ev'ning comes with regular relief,
Nor fills with pois'nous inſects all the air.

The

The ghaunt wolf prowling thro' the ſhades of night,
Thy tranquil folds have never learnt to fear;
Dread howlings echo'd from the mountain's height,
Fall not at eve upon the wounded ear.

The mild Weſt temp'ring every ruder gale,
O'er man and brute with ſofteſt influence reigns,
In the ſame tender mould their tempers caſt,
Peaceful thy cities, populous thy plains.

Nor gentleneſs than beauty leſs their pride,
Thy gen'rous courſers feeble hands reſtrain,
And ductile to the fair or infant guide,
Turn to the bit, and yield them to the rein.

Oh! what are golden fruits and roseat bow'rs,
When the heart ſickens and enjoyments ceaſe?
Oh! what are clamorous mirth, the gayeſt hours,
Compar'd with comfort and domeſtick peace?

Give me again to hail my native ſhore,
Theſe vaunted climates cheerful I reſign;
Oh! Albion might I greet thy cliffs once more,
What were a monarch's happineſs to mine!

Monday,

Monday, Dec. 7.

We paid an early viſit this morning to the Larimers, to know how the old lady had borne her yeſterday's fatigue. We found her well, and Mr. Ewer with her. This gentleman, indefatigable in his endeavours to aſſiſt diſtreſſed innocence, has contrived to have a ſubſcription ſet on foot for their relief, among their old acquaintance in London, by means of his correſpondent already mentioned. This has produced twenty pounds—a moſt ſeaſonable relief; he found the letter, incloſing a bill for the ſum, at the poſt-houſe at M. in the evening of yeſterday, but returned too late to give immediate advice of the good news; it was, however, his firſt buſineſs in the morning. Judge, my dear Edward, of the feelings of their grateful hearts at this unexpected ſuccour; judge of thoſe of ſympathetic

thetic hearts, for well thou canſt; for me, I ſhall not attempt to deſcribe either. Judge too of partial ones, that is, perhaps, not ſo eaſy—but ſhould you want a model, I know where to ſeek it—O! my poor Harriet! We were eaſily prevailed upon to lengthen our walk homeward, in order to hear from Mr. Ewer the particulars of Miſs Larimer's ſorrows. He had a ſiſter, who was her boſom friend, and it was from her he learnt the detail. Of this ſiſter he ſpoke with much tenderneſs and ſome tears; ſhe died of a decline at the age of twenty-four, which was one reaſon of his leaving London for Briſtol, in order to change the ſcene. Miſs Larimer's hiſtory I defer till to-morrow.

Tuesday,

Tuesday, Dec. 8.

It is Mr. Ewer that ſpeaks—Miſs Larimer, amiable and intereſting as ſhe is, to all who have the happineſs of knowing her well, is cold and reſerved to ſtrangers, both from nature and habit: her perſon has ſuffered ſome little alteration; ſhe is, as you know, tall and well formed. I have ſeen her complexion have ſomething more of the roſe; but her features never had any thing ſtriking to common obſervers—whom, indeed, ſhe was little ſolicitous to attract. She had an intimate friend, in every thing the reverſe of herſelf. She was little, lively, and pretty, and with leſs than the half of Miſs Larimer's ſenſe and accompliſhments, always appeared to poſſeſs much more; her little wit was always ready, her ſmall ſtock of knowledge ever at command, for there was no obſtruction of timidity to prevent the diſplay of either.

She ſung agreeably, danced well, laughed very much, and was a general toaſt among all the young men of faſhion in the circle wherein ſhe moved. She uſually reſided with her family, conſiſting of her mother, who had been ſome years a widow, and ſeveral younger ſiſters, in a village at a few miles from London; but ſhe was frequently viſiting at Mrs. Larimer's, being a ſchool friend of her daughter's, for months together; her name was Cuthfort.

Among the number of young men whom the gaieties of Mr. Larimer's houſe attracted thither, was a young ſtudent of the Temple, named Folwing; he was perſonable and well bred, had ſtudied with advantage, was of unexceptionable manners, and withal heir to a good eſtate. I believe Mr. Larimer was deſirous of his alliance, for he always treated him with particul... regard; and Mrs. Larimer, from the double motive of obliging her huſband and follow-

ing

ing her own inclination, did the ſame. Mr. Folwing's viſits were frequent and aſſiduous, and the cauſe, unfortunately for Miſs Larimer, too long miſtaken; her friends were the firſt to flatter her that ſhe was the magnet of attraction; they ſpoke their wiſhes, and her heart re-echoed them; that heart, naturally tender and affectionate, an enthuſiaſtic admirer of virtue and goodneſs, and rather diſpoſed to melancholy, was the very ſoil for love to take deep root. Mr. Folwing ruled there, unconſcious of his power, for he was really a worthy young man, utterly incapable of th baſeneſs of ſeeking to enſnare an innocent heart, for the mere purpoſe of ſport or vanity.

After ſome time ſpent in this manner, in aſſiduity on his part, and increaſing partiality on hers, he found an opportunity of addreſſing her alone; his introductory diſcourſe had ſo much of perturbation and confuſion, that Miſs Larimer might have very

very naturally ſuppoſed it related to herſelf; ſhe was, however, ſoon undeceived; he concluded an incoherent ſpeech, expreſſive of the higheſt eſteem and regard for her good ſenſe and diſcernment, by requeſting her influence with her fair friend. Miſs Larimer bore the ſhock as became her, and without at all betraying her feelings; ſhe had been confuſed from the onſet, ſo that the bitter diſappointment ſhe felt was concealed by her firſt emotions. She pauſed an inſtant, and aſſuming all her reſolution, ſhe told Mr. Folwing, that although ſhe could not think he ſtood in any want of a mediatrix, he might depend on every aſſiſtance in her power. She kept her word, though well aware that her friend had no claim upon her generoſity; for a thouſand circumſtances which ſhe had recollected, and has often told my ſiſter, convinced her that the little coquet, though incapable of a generous affection for any one, had played her

part

part ſo well, as to make Mr. Folwing believe ſhe was dying for love of him. This gentleman loſing his father ſoon after, his affairs called him to a diſtant part of the kingdom, whence he could only converſe with Miſs Cuthfort by letter. Writing was not an accompliſhment wherein ſhe excelled; ſhe was conſcious of it, and uſed to apply to Miſs Larimer to dictate her anſwers; this her generous friend was ever ready to do; ſhe cheriſhed a romantic pleaſure in indulging herſelf in expreſſions of tenderneſs, though in the perſon of another, to the object ſhe had ſo long ſecretly preferred. She has a talent for the epiſtolary ſtile, and herein particularly, writing from her heart, ſhe excelled herſelf. Mr. Folwing was enraptured at the diſcovery of his miſtreſs's excellence in this line; for, with all his partiality for her, he did not at all expect it; his moſt ſanguine hopes, on this head, had been confined to decent correctneſs of orthography and

and ſtile—he was enchanted with the correſpondence, and wrote almoſt every poſt, never failing to expreſs in the higheſt ſtile of praiſe his admiration of his dear Letitia's ſuppoſed talent. Theſe eulogiums gratified her delicate rival, who found in the approbation a melancholy pleaſure, the only one ſhe was juſt then capable of taſting.

At length the term of baniſhment was at an end, and Mr. Folwing haſtened on the wings of love to his deſtined bride.—Obliged to paſs through London, he could not forbear calling on Miſs Larimer, and ſhewing her the charming letters he had received from his Letitia. "You muſt have ſeen of her writing, Miſs Larimer," ſaid he, "yet you never told me of the agreeable talent—you meant to enjoy my ſurprize."

Miſs

Miſs L. looked ſlightly over the lines ſhe knew ſo well; ſhe even affected to criticiſe whatever was the leaſt exceptionable, in order to enjoy his animated eulogium. This pleaſure, however, was of a very mixt kind.—"O! my dear Mary," ſhe would often ſay to my ſiſter, "ſure he might have loved me, when he ſo often declares, that had he never ſeen Miſs Cuthfort, he muſt have adored a woman that was miſtreſs of ſuch a pen." In anſwer to ſuch complaints my poor ſiſter would frequently reproach her for the generous deceit ſhe put upon him. "Why, my dear," ſhe would ſay, "when the man diſcovers what an empty rattle he has married, don't you think he will have juſt cauſe of complaint againſt thoſe who lent her brains?"

The marriage did not immediately take place; Miſs Cuthfort was obliged to attend her mother to Bath, where ſhe found herſelf extremely embarraſſed for her amanuenſis.

nuenſis. The only expedient, to ſend her lover's letters to Miſs Larimer to be anſwered, and then to have them again ſent to her at Bath to be copied, occaſioned ſo unuſual a delay of her anſwers, which uſed to be ſo punctual, that Mr. Folwing's letters were filled with complaints and reproaches to her of unkindneſs, and ſhe was at her wit's end. Herein, however, her friend helped her out; ſhe pleaded, in excuſe, the attendance on her mother, to which ſhe was obliged; and requeſted with ſo much tenderneſs that he would continue to write as often as before, and believe that ſhe did ſo as often as poſſible, that he was ſatisfied, and no longer required regular anſwers; he never failed to ſhew Miſs Larimer all the letters he received, to admire them, and to lament that they were not more frequent; his viſits to the houſe were more conſtant than ever, for he was now really in love, and all his delight was to converſe on the dear object with her friend.

friend. Poor Lucy, who had thus continual opportunities of obſerving the excellence of his heart, the warmth and integrity of his affections, and his many ſtriking good qualities, felt her regret for what ſhe loſt increaſe in proportion with her conviction of its value; her attachment gained ſtrength, and her health declined; ſhe looked forward with a kind of deſperate reſignation to the event that was to put an end to every latent hope, and wiſhed for the nuptials almoſt as ardently as the lovers.—The day came at laſt; Mr. Folwing's term of mourning being expired; and Mrs. Cuthfort recovered, Miſs Larimer attended the bride to the altar; my ſiſter was likewiſe preſent; ſhe ſaw the paleneſs of death overſpread the cheek of her friend during the ceremony, and ſcreened and ſupported her.

Mr. Folwing took his bride out of town immediately after the nuptials—they re-

ſided the ſummer months altogether in the country, and the intimacy between her and Miſs Larimer, from prudence on one ſide, and perhaps a little jealouſy on the other, gradually ſubſided. Miſs Larimer, however, ſtill retains the effects of this deep rooted affection, in a ſettled melancholy of temper, though it is probable the cauſe has long ceaſed to exiſt.

When Mr. Ewer had finiſhed his narrative, we had a thouſand queſtions to aſk, which our concern for the intereſting object of it dictated certainly more than curioſity—as whether Mr. and Mrs. Folwing were happy?—if they had children?—if Mrs. F. was likely to live for ever? &c. &c.

Mr. Ewer, however, could not ſatisfy us; he had communicated all he knew; for his ſiſter falling dangerouſly ill, and dying ſoon after, his whole attention was taken up with her;

her; and he had neither leiſure nor inclination to be obſervant of concerns of leſs intereſt.

Soon after this heavy loſs, he removed to Briſtol.

Thursday 10.

I ſuſpect, my dear Edward, that the wedding day is fixed, though it is kept ſo ſecret, that not even Harriet knows of it.—The neighbours, however, have ſome how or other got ſcent of it; and the young folks are laying hook and line to be invited.

Two of the Miſs Figginſes called this morning with offers of help, in the line of needle work, for Miſs Peterſon. They would come, they ſaid, and ſtay the day, or take any thing home with them, which

ever was moſt agreeable. Miſs P. thanked them with a myſterious air, ſaying, there was no ſuch very particular hurry.

Theſe ladies were hardly gone before Miſs Grove arrived with Mrs. Bennet:—Their buſineſs was to find out the day by pretending to know it. The unmarried lady aſked me, in a whiſper, "if the wedding day was not fixed for Tueſday ſe'ennight?" It was not, however, in my power to anſwer her ſatisfactorily. She then addreſſed the principal:—"So I hear we are to loſe you ſoon, Miſs Charlotte?" "I can't tell, indeed," was the anſwer." "Nay, if you can't tell, who can?" reſumed the indefatigable inquirer; "yet, I aſſure you, all the pariſh pretends to it; but there is ſuch a ſet of goſſips, always troubling themſelves about other people's buſineſs, that one is really afraid to ſpeak before or after any body. I ſuppoſe I have heard at twenty places that the day

was

was fixed for next week." Miſs P. ſaid, that other people were more in a hurry than ſhe was. "Ah, you ſly thing!" reſumed Miſs Grove, "you won't tell, nor ſo much as ſhew one the beautiful ear-rings your ſpark has made you a preſent of." Miſs P. now ran gaily to fetch them, ſmiling at me; but neither then nor ſince, attempted to convince Miſs G. of her real or affected miſtake with regard to the donor.

"Now this is ſomething like a lover," ſaid ſhe, on ſeeing them; "well, my dear, you'll be vaſtly happy.—I ſhould like, of all things, juſt ſuch a lover, and juſt ſuch ear-rings.—But don't they ſay they were that Miſs, what d'ye call ems, that goes by two names? I ſhould like all of them but that: how in the world ſhould ſhe come by them? And ſo, I hear, they are come to live here juſt by; and ſome ſay

they are Mr. Ewer's mother and ſiſter; and ſome ſay the younger is nearer a kin ſtill: for my part I never trouble my head about other people's buſineſs—but ſhe's a mighty plain piece of goods.—I ſhould rather ſuſpect Mr. Sly-boots had a better taſte." "So, Miſs Grove," ſaid Miſs Bennet, "there's no accounting for taſte; every Jack has his Gill, you know."

Miſs Anne Peterſon here obſerved, that there was no doubt of Mrs. and Miſs Larimer's being people of character. "Why, yes, to be ſure, my dear," ſaid Miſs Grove, "I dare ſay they have ſome character or other; but people will talk, you know; and when a man drops from the clouds, and after a little while two women, his friends, drop in the ſame manner, and they prove to be old acquaintance, and *ſo* kind and *ſo* ſympathetick—'tis mighty romantick, and pretty to be ſure. But of all

things

things I love the introduction here of the lace;—dear Mrs. Peterſon does *ſo* love a bargain."

Admire my patience, Edward, in not uttering a word all this time; indeed I was well convinced it would have been waſte of breath to have ſpoken. Juſt here, however, I beckoned to Harriet; and both haſtening to our apartments, we were preſently equipped for a walk—flying, for refuge, to the innocent objects of all this malignity, to the contraſt of what we had been doomed to witneſs; that is, to dignified patient ſuffering, to gentleneſs, ſweetneſs, and urbanity, perſonified in our amiable friends the Larimers.

Friday 11.

I haſten to communicate ſome good news to my Edward--I ſay *haſten*, as if, alas! it was going by the poſt. I muſt, however, write all that intereſts me, and ſome time, perhaps, he may read it. But to my news:—Mr. Larimer is at length traced to a ſmall town in the north of Ireland, at a conſiderable diſtance from his own eſtate; it appears that he has taken a houſe, and is ſettled there. Mr. Ewer's friend writes that he is ſure of this; and that he hopes to bring this abandoned man to ſome terms.

Mrs. Larimer, whom I have juſt ſeen, revives on this little glimmering of hope. She is ſtill tenderly attached to her worthleſs huſband, in ſpite of all his ill-uſage; and, ſtrange to tell, looks upon her ſeparation

tion from him, as the leaſt ſupportable of all her misfortunes.

Mr. Ewer ſays, that he is uncommonly handſome in his perſon, and engaging in his manners. Harriet is unwilling to allow this; ſhe thinks ſuch a monſter in mind, muſt be ugly and diſagreeable in perſon. He might have been handſome when young, ſhe ſays; but certainly in proceſs of time, features, however good, muſt take the impreſſion of the ſoul, and, in ſome ſort, manners too.

Saturday 12.

Our family have been in continual buſtle all the week; and one or other of the females abſent, ſometimes to make purchaſes at M—, ſometimes to make preparations at the deſtined bridegroom's.

They are all gone to M— to-day, which certainly denotes ſomething extraordinary, as I never yet knew Mrs. Peterſon abſent herſelf on a Saturday before: hints, too, of great buſineſs for the enſuing week are continually dropping; but whether it relates to the wedding, or merely to preparations for it, I am yet to learn.

Sunday 13.

Since the ghoſt was ſo effectually laid, Harriet has returned to her apartment, and we have experienced no alarm. Sometimes, I think, I hear ſomething walking along the paſſage; but I no longer trouble myſelf to explore the cauſe: it ſeems, however, that there are perſons who have more curioſity.

Laſt

Laſt night Mrs. Peterſon having ſat up late on ſome domeſtick buſineſs, heard the paſſage door open: ſhe immediately flew up ſtairs, and following the ſound, ſaw, with her own eyes, her darling Mr. Thomas juſt entering the apartment of the *virtuous* Hannah. Her indignation, at this diſcovery, knew no bounds; it waked me in great terror: but that was one of the leaſt of its effects. She attacked the trembling Hannah in her bed, tore off the cloaths, and inſiſted upon her leaving the houſe that moment. The wench proteſted, in vain, that ſhe knew nothing of Mr. Thomas's viſit; and that ſhe was as innocent as the babe unborn. Her cries, and the violence of Mrs. P. brought back the gallant, who was ſneaking to his own room. "I'll tell you what, mother," ſaid he, "you had beſt be quiet, and let the girl alone; for if you turns her out to-night, d'ye ſee, why, I'll marry her to-morrow morning, that's all."

Hannah

Hannah caught at this hint, and no longer interceded to ſtay.—She hurried on her cloaths, and was preparing to depart, in ſpite of a dark and ſtormy night; but the ſame motive that made her ſo ready to go, determined her miſtreſs that ſhe ſhould ſtay.—She bounced out of the room, locking the door after her; and followed her ſon through the paſſage, with expoſtulations, ſomewhat in a milder key: "Why, ſure, Tom, you would not go for to do ſuch a fooliſh thing.—What, marry ſuch a dirty drab, you that might have the beſt man's daughter in the county." "It will be your fault if I do, mother," ſaid he; "don't you provoke me, d'ye ſee, always watching and dodging one about: look to your girls, mother; I ſuppoſe I be about old enough to take care of myſelf."

All is quiet this morning; but the family are ſeriouſly apprehenſive that young hopeful may be mad enough to do what he threatens;

threatens; and certainly Mrs. Hannah would be no very deſirable addition to it. Even Harriet has her fears, which I can neither blame nor ſuppreſs, for I ſee but too much grounds for them. It is clear this girl has found a key to her lover's heart, which, though it be naturally of the cloſeſt kind, opens freely to load her with preſents. Every Sunday ſhe aſtoniſhes the ſpectators with ſome new finery, which ſhe can have only from him. The youth does not appear to ſtand at all in awe of his father; and, I fear, he does not regard his mother ſufficiently to give up his inclination to hers. In ſhort, my dear Edward, we ſhall have probably two weddings for one; this laſt, however, will give me much concern: I cannot live in a family without feeling, in ſome ſort, as if I were part of it.

Miſs Peterſon wiſhes to engage Sally to live with her. Her miſtreſs offers to give her

her up.—She, however, declines to change, under pretence of unwillingneſs to remove further from her mother.—"That," ſhe owned to Harriet, "was, indeed, one reaſon; but I have a ſtronger, Miſs," ſaid ſhe,—"a much greater objection to leaving Mrs. Willars and you.—When you marry, if I could ſuit you, I ſhould like, of all things, to be your maid." "Don't hinder yourſelf for any thing ſo unlikely, my good girl," ſaid Harriet, much pleaſed with the artleſs compliment, "I don't think I ſhall ever marry: but whatever may be my condition, if I am able to keep a maid, you certainly ſhould have the preference."

This worthy creature aſked for a holiday laſt week: and how do you think ſhe employed it? She had heard me ſay that Miſs Larimer was going to waſh ſome linen that day, and lament the neceſſity ſhe was under of undertaking what ſhe was ſo

ſo unfit for. Without hinting a word of her deſign, ſhe went and offered her ſervices; did the whole buſineſs, certainly much better, as well as much more expeditiouſly, than poor Miſs Larimer could have done it; and was not to be prevailed on to accept the ſmalleſt gratification.

Mrs. Larimer, who thought I had ſent her, thanked me for it the firſt time ſhe ſaw me. Till then I was ignorant of it, for the good girl never dropt the leaſt hint of the kind action ſhe had been doing.

I fear this will coſt me a favourite gown of yours, which I have kept a long while, becauſe it was your taſte; however, I am ſure my love will think it well beſtowed.

Monday

Monday 14.

I am reproached here with being old fashioned in my appearance—the ladies impute it to careleſſneſs; but there is another cauſe. You cannot think, my love, how unwilling I am to alter any part of my dreſs, which you approved or thought becoming. I fear to have a different look from that which was wont to attract you. Alas! methinks, if ever we meet again, time and grief will have but too much altered the form and countenance you once delighted in. I dread to make the change more conſpicuous by another ſtyle of dreſs. I love ſingularity, however, ſo little, that I doubt I muſt ſoon give up even this favourite fancy, in order to look like other people.

Mr. Bertram, the lover, dined here yeſterday; and afterwards accompanied Mrs.

and

and the Miſs Peterſons on a viſit.—Neither Harriet nor I were invited to be of the party; and we ſpent an evening infinitely to our taſte at home. Mr. Ewer was with us, and our converſation was chiefly on the Larimers. He informed us, that he had received another letter from his friend, with further intelligence of Mr. Larimer; but of ſo unpleaſant a nature, that he could not venture to impart it to the perſons concerned, without firſt conſulting with us. It appears that Mr. Larimer has ſpread a report of his wife's death:—that he has even worn mourning for her; and only quitted it in order to be publicly married to Mrs. G——, the lady we have already mentioned: whether ſhe is really or only apparently the dupe of this manœuvre, we have no means of aſcertaining; nor is it very material to know.

Mr. Ewer's friend ſuggeſts that, perhaps, by alarming Mr. Larimer with threats of a pro-

a proſecution, he might be brought to terms, and make ſome proviſion for his wife; or if, he ſays, ſhe chooſes to undertake a ſuit in earneſt, he is willing to contribute all the advice and aſſiſtance in his power; though he fears it could anſwer no purpoſe but of beggaring them all, it being abſolutely certain, that Mr. L. has not a foot of land remaining, and that all his dependence is on the fortune of his newly eſpouſed wife. Diſtreſſing as this intelligence muſt neceſſarily be to Mrs. Larimer, we were all unanimous that it ought not to be kept from her; for the matter, though it requires deliberation, muſt be ſpeedily determined upon.

I am going by and bye to comfort or counſel her, as ſhall be moſt expedient; for ſhe was to be made acquainted with the contents of the letter this morning. Mr. Ewer ſays, he has ſtudied a little law, and knows enough of it to diſſuade Mrs. L. from

from engaging in it, even were ſhe ſo diſpoſed.

Tuesday 15.

We arrived at Mrs. Larimer's ſoon after Mr. Ewer had left her. I ſaid we were come to ſpend a long afternoon, and take tea with her. "Ah, honey, my dear!" ſaid ſhe, "I know your kind errand; that good ſoul, Mr. Ewer, has juſt left us; we have been conſulting together, but, indeed, I know not what to reſolve upon: to compound with poor Mr. Larimer for a ſorry maintenance: — Suppoſing that he would come to any terms; what would that be but conniving at his diſorders, and making myſelf, in ſome ſort, a partaker of them? To purſue him in law—alas! my dear Madam, I could ſooner conſent to ſtarve. You have a huſband whom you love.—

love.—Do tell me what you would determine upon in my place?"

I owned, my dear Edward, that I found it infinitely hard to reſolve. "I believe," ſaid I, after ſome reflection, "if I had a good friend on whom I could rely, I would give up my cauſe into their hands, and abide by what they ſhould determine.—Such a friend you have, my dear Mrs. Larimer, in Mr. Ewer; let him act for you—you are convinced that it will be uprightly; and truſt to Providence for the event."—"I have great reaſon to do as you adviſe me, Mrs. Willars," ſaid ſhe, "to truſt to Providence. Oh, how good has it been to me, unworthy! I will throw myſelf upon that, and you do what you pleaſe as to my affairs; it cannot be but for the beſt. Indeed, I am utterly incapable of judging for myſelf; and as for poor Lucy, ſhe never has any opinion but mine. What do you ſay, my dear?" Miſs Larimer

ſaid ſhe would rejoice at any ſcheme that would ſave her mother uneaſineſs, if it was not, at the ſame time, giving her friends ſo much trouble.

The point of trouble was ſoon ſettled, as you may ſuppoſe; and the converſation turned upon other topics. Harriet ventured to ſpeak of Mr. Ewer's ſiſter, and to inquire if ſhe was like *him?* The retroſpection coſt Miſs Larimer a deep ſigh; but ſhe ſpeedily recovered, and ſeemed to enter with pleaſure on a ſubject ſo dear and intereſting to her.

"My poor friend, Mary Ewer," ſaid ſhe, "was very like what Mr. Ewer once was, for I knew him when he had uncommon ſpirits, and was not at all too thin. She was agreeable in her perſon, and faſcinating in her manners—lively, without being light—frank and ſincere, without being either rough or rude—warm,

yet

yet ſteady in her attachments—tender, generous, complaiſant, and without one ſpark of ſelfiſhneſs in her whole compoſition:—ſuch was the dear friend I once boaſted, and have now loſt for ever! I have known ſome perſons accuſe her of want of feeling; ſhe wanted, indeed, for affectation of it:—ſhe poſſeſſed the reality, and had no need of grimace. I have often obſerved your delicate ladies, who are always boaſting of their fine feelings, confine them chiefly to themſelves."

Harriet liſtened to this animated picture with evident delight. "Poor Mr. Ewer!" ſaid ſhe, "he may well lament the loſs of ſuch a ſiſter." "Ah, indeed, but he may," ſaid Mrs. Larimer, "for ſhe was a lovely creature; and he will never ſee her fellow, except it is yourſelf."—Harriet bluſhed deeply at the compariſon. "So, my dear Lucy," continued the old lady, without noticing the effect of her obſervation,

obſervation, "do ſhew Miſs Harriet the little piece of poetry you made upon her death.—We are all among friends, you know: nay, never be aſhamed, my child; we know you don't ſet up for an author."

We both joined in the intreaty; and obtained, with ſome difficulty, a ſight of the following lines, written, as ſhe told us, in an alcove, on the margin of a ſmall river which ran by her father's country ſeat, where ſhe had ſpent many happy hours with the friend ſhe laments:

Oh! late my comfort, now my grief,
Say, where thy friend ſhall find relief?
Thy ſocial converſe how ſupply,
'Till cropt like thee, ſhe droop and die?
Still muſt ſhe penſive and alone,
Recall thoſe hours for ever flown;
When oft with thee at even tide,
She mark'd yon ſilver current glide,
Heedleſs as there ſhe fixt her view,
Her tranſient joys were paſſing too,

Alike as on that ſurface borne,
Were fleeting, never to return?
Still muſt ſhe ſeek thee, gentle ſhade,
Where but of late with thee ſhe ſtray'd,
Where lately that enliv'ning voice,
Her drooping ſpirit could rejoice.
Alas! in vain—ſhe ne'er muſt hear
Thoſe ſounds ſo grateful to her ear:
Nor ever ſhall this widow'd heart,
Its joys or care to thee impart,
Or on that tender friendly breaſt,
Huſh all her ſorrows ſoft to reſt;
That breaſt where truth and candour ſhone,
With native frankneſs all thy own!
Oh, dearly priz'd!—oh, lov'd ſo well!
Oh, early loſt!—a long farewell!
Oft I'll frequent this lone retreat,
Theſe mournful accents oft repeat;
Oh, dearly priz'd!—oh, lov'd ſo well!
Oh, ever loſt!—a ſad farewell!

Wednesday 16.

Though the weather was far from being inviting, and partook of the ſeaſon, feeling a want of exerciſe, I ſtrolled this afternoon alone to the grove at the extremity of the large garden, which I have already had occaſion to mention. This ſpot, though ſmall, is eminently favoured by nature; and, at a little expence, might be made enchanting.

I know not how it has been ſo long neglected; for Mr. Peterſon has a taſte for improvement, and none of that narrowneſs which grudges every expence, however trifling, which does not turn to ſome account of profit. He has promiſed me that it ſhall be adorned in the ſpring; and that my taſte ſhall have the direction of the plan. Already ſome woodbines and jeſſa-

mines, planted in the autumn, at my requeſt, cling to the ſupporting trees; and I anticipate the ſeaſon when they will be clad with verdure and bloom.

I had brought ſome crumbs for the poor little inhabitants, and having ſcattered them about, was conſidering of my plan of improvement; when I thought I heard a ruſtling behind a high hedge, which bounds all one ſide of the grove, and adds materially to its beauty. I paid little attention to this at firſt, ſuppoſing it might be a hare, or ſome ſuch thing. Sappho, who had followed me, ran directly to the ſpot whence the noiſe proceeded, barking very much—obſerve it was between us and our way home—I began to feel a little alarmed, apprehending ſome ill-diſpoſed perſon might be concealed behind the hedge, and ſtood heſitating whether to proceed, or take another way home, which was a little too far, the evening now cloſing apace.

By

By this time my companion had ceased barking, and was wagging his tail with an air of ſatisfaction and acquaintance. This encouraged me; and I purſued my road. As I approached the place I heard whiſpering. I was tempted to run by, but reſtrained myſelf; and, without altering my pace, marched on, endeavouring to look very big, and reached the garden gate, without once turning back, or ſeeming to have noticed what I heard. Here feeling ſecure, I indulged my curioſity with a peep behind the hedge; when, who ſhould I ſee advancing, with ſlow ſtep, and arm in arm, but Mr. Thomas Peterſon, and his hand-maid Hannah? They were talking earneſtly, and did not obſerve me.

I haſtily withdrew, and as yet have not communicated my adventure. I mean, however, to appriſe Mr. Peterſon of it to-morrow.

Thursday, Dec. 17.

Our family are all in confuſion and diſmay. How I reflect upon myſelf for not having inſtantly communicated the ſcene I witneſſed yeſterday! I left my room betimes this morning, in order to tell Mr. Peterſon of it before he went from home. I found him at breakfaſt, and briefly related what I thought it concerned him to know; he made very light of the intelligence, and only anſwered, that he did not know what was become of the boy; that he had been waiting breakfaſt for him an hour, and ſhould be obliged to ſet out without him if he did not come ſoon. He invited me to ſit down and pour out the tea, and take ſome with him, which I did. Mrs. Peterſon was walking about, fretting, and wondering where the boy could be. We finiſhed our breakfaſt; the horſes were at the door; Mr. Peterſon ſeemed more uneaſy than he choſe to acknowledge

knowledge, and very unwilling to ſet out without his ſon. While he was ſauntering about, inventing pretences to cauſe ſome delay, Mr. Thomas ſuddenly entered at the back door. "Why, where have you been, Tom?" ſaid his mother, "keeping your father and every body waiting; what can you have been about?"—"Bin, mother," anſwered the youth, "why, I've bin to church, and I've bin about being married; I've brought you a good ſightly daughter-in-law that's no fine leady; but ſhe's ne'er the worſe for that—what ſay, mother? nay, don't look ſo croſs; ſhall I bring her in?"—"No; get out yourſelf, you graceleſs wretch," ſaid his mother, at length recovering the faculty of ſpeech, "and never let me ſee your face again." She then burſt into a paſſion of tears. Mr. Peterſon coldly inquired if he ſpoke ſeriouſly, and, being anſwered in the affirmative, mounted his horſe and rode off without proffering another word. "Zo, a pret-

ty wedding-day I'm like to have of it," ſaid the bridegroom; "I'll e'en go and keep it at the plough—zo, good folks, when you chooſe to zee my wife you may zee me, that's all." He then went out the way he entered.

Miſs Peterſons are both in tears, and Harriet more than ſhares the general diſtreſs—it is certainly a very unpleaſant occurrence, and the more ſo for being without remedy. It now appears that Mr. Thomas has had the licence ſome days; thus it is no ſudden reſolve of love or deſpite.

Saturday, Dec. 19.

The laſt two days, my dear Edward, I have ſpent wholly in endeavours to aſſiſt or amuſe

amuſe the family, the members of which begin to recover their cheerfulneſs, and are ſomewhat better reconciled to the late diſagreeable addition to it.

Mr. Thomas has lodged his bride in the apartment, late Mrs. Larimer's, on the common; he has made ſeveral attempts towards peace, and an introduction of her here, which, as yet, have all been ineffectual. His father has not ſeen him, nor does he ever ſpeak of him; if he is accidentally mentioned, he either turns the diſcourſe or quits the room.

Preparations for the approaching nuptials, which are to be celebrated next Tueſday, a little divert the attention from thoſe that are paſſed: ſometimes, indeed, they bring them to mind, which never fails to ſpread a temporary gloom over the ſunſhine. The neighbours, on their part, have not been backward in their viſits of con-

dolence; deputations have arrived from every family; but either from ſome awkwardneſs in the expreſſion, or latent malignity of heart, their compliments ſavour more of triumph than of ſympathy. Some of the younger ones, among the females, appear, indeed, a little mortified at being overlooked for a ſervant; they bridle and wonder at Mr. Thomas's low notions. It is even whiſpered that Miſs Jane Figgins is almoſt ſick about it; it is certain that he uſed to notice her; but it was to treat her with particular rudeneſs—there is no accounting for taſte.

Miſs Grove inquired of the Miſs Peterſons, if their new ſiſter-in-law was not to be at the wedding? "If I am not to be married without her being preſent," ſaid the eldeſt, "I may lead apes indeed; really, madam, ſhe is no ſiſter of mine, nor will I ever acknowledge her."—"Nay, don't put yourſelf in a paſſion, my dear,"

returned Miſs Grove, "for that wont undo the relationſhip, whether you have her at your wedding or no; indeed ſhe may be brought to bed by that time, and not fit to venture out: I ſhall like to ſee the little puppet; they ſay it ought to have a feature of every man in the pariſh; but, be that as it may, I dare ſay poor Mrs. Peterſon will ſtand godmother, and be very fond of it; ſhe will be ſo proud to be called granny; but don't look ſo croſs, for here's Mr. Bertram a-coming, and he may think 'tis at him; beſides, my dear, I aſſure you I ſhould be as little pleaſed to have your ſiſter at the wedding as you yourſelf, for I depend upon being bride's-maid."

Miſs Peterſon made her no anſwer, for ſhe was privately reſolving that ſhe ſhould not be invited. She has, however, in compliance with her father' poſitive injunction, been ſince obliged to include her in the general invitation ſent to all the neigh-

bours, though it coſt her ſome tears; in vain ſhe pleaded a woman's right to be miſtreſs, at leaſt for that day: her father's poſitive—"I tell you I will have it ſo,"—is accuſtomed to ſilence all oppoſition. Mr. Ewer has called but once ſince the misfortune; he cautiouſly avoided hinting at it, till Mrs. Peterſon herſelf introduced the topic, and then entered with ſo much kindneſs into her ſentiments, and ſpoke of the matter with an air of ſuch intereſt and concern, that ſhe could not help being ſtruck with the contraſt of his behaviour to that of their other friends—"who ſeem," ſaid ſhe, after he was gone, "to make quite a joke of it. As to William Grove, 'tis nuts to he, and his ſiſter's as bad. I wonder how they'd like it if their brother John was to marry the cook wench?"

Sunday,

Sunday, Dec. 20.

Harriet and I have juſt been, at Mr. Peterſon's deſire, to invite Mrs. and Miſs Larimer to the wedding dinner. Our poor friends were rather diſtreſſed than pleaſed with the compliment; they were unwilling to accept, yet afraid to decline it.—"What have ſuch melancholy faces to do at feſtivals," ſaid Mrs. Larimer, "unleſs, indeed, as a *memento mori* to put the company in mind of their laſt end? I ſhall think I am perſonating the death's head, dreſſed out in finery, which a gentleman I have heard of, never failed to introduce to his young viſitors. Alas! Mrs. Willars, we neither of us can give, nor partake of pleaſure."

We both aſſured them that, at leaſt, they would confer great pleaſure on us, and ſo far vanquiſhed their objections, that we aſſiſted,

aſſiſted, previous to our return, at a conference relative to the important diſcuſſion of what gowns and caps it would be proper to ſport on the occaſion. We adviſed a little alteration in the form of both, which I hope will agreeably engage them to-morrow, and returned quite happy at our ſucceſs; for I would willingly engage Mr. Peterſon's good will and protection on the ſide of my friends, and know that the road to his heart is a ready compliance with his wiſhes; he is very free of invitations, and hates nothing ſo much as to be refuſed. I aſſured the ladies, as I left them, that I was as averſe to noiſy obſtreperous mirth as they could be; its uſual effect is to depreſs my ſpirits inſtead of raiſing them. You know, my Edward, they are not wont to riſe above the key of cheerfulneſs, and, but for ſome unuſual cauſe, rarely ſink below it; thus, though often ſerious, I am hardly ever ſad; 'tis a happy natural tone of mind for which one cannot be ſufficient-

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ly grateful. Miss Larimer has hurried after us to offer her assistance in setting out the table. "We had once a very clever housekeeper," said she, "whom I used to like to assist." Her offer is accepted, which seems to give her great pleasure. Mr. Peterson is gone out with invitations; it is to be quite a general feast. It was not so at our nuptials, Edward—no, indeed.

"What tho' in silence sacred Hymen trod,
"Nor lyre proclaim'd, nor garland crown'd the god;
"What tho' no feast, nor revel dance was there,
"(Vain pomp of joy the happy well may spare),
"Yet love unfeign'd ———
"All heav'n, and ev'ry friendly pow'r,
"Approv'd the vow, and bless't the love."

Wednesday,

Wednesday, Dec. 23.

Stillneſs and comfortable quiet ſucceed to the uproar of yeſterday and the buſtle of its eve; and once again I reſume my pen and ſalute my Edward. How fares it with my love? In the ſeaman's phraſe, What cheer? I have a diſagreeable nervous head-ache, the conſequence of our late jollity. Could I but be certain that thou wert well, how light were all my little pains. Only two coaches, well filled, conveyed the bridal company to church. I was not among them. There were only relations, except the bride's-maids, Miſs Grove and Miſs Jane Figgins, and Mr. J. Grove. The bride was dreſſed, as uſual, in white, was in ſpirits, and looked very handſome. When they returned, as I ſaw her, led by the bridegroom, looking ſo happy, a ſigh eſcaped me—ah! thought I, you are united, and we are parted. I then

ran

ran to meet and give them joy, firſt wiping away the ſtarting tear my ſhort reflection had occaſioned. The company were by this time aſſembled, and partook of a very plentiful breakfaſt. The ſeaſon not allowing of out-door diverſions, Mr. Peterſon had ordered violins, and ſoon after the repaſt the younger part of the gueſts were all in motion. I danced ſeveral dances; you will not be jealous when I tell you my partners were Mr. Peterſon and Mr. Deacon; the latter I invited in order to relieve Harriet, who, in the mean time, tript away very gaily with the bridegroom. Mr. Ewer led out the bride, and acquitted himſelf with much elegance. At one o'clock a very handſome dinner was ſerved, with a deſert, ſet out by Miſs Larimer, in ſuch a ſtyle as was never before ſeen at Southlands, and aſtoniſhed even thoſe who had admired the mayor's feaſt in its vicinage.

While

While we were taking our ſeats for dinner a little buſtle occurred, and who ſhould appear but Mr. Thomas Peterſon and his roſy bouncing bride, led in by the father; the latter ſaid, he hoped it would be no offence to the good company if he introduced all his family, among the reſt his prodigal ſon. The ladies, who were quite unprepared for this ſurprize, looked very blank. This did not prevent the new comers from taking their ſeats with the other gueſts, where Mr. Thomas ſoon began to crack jeſts as uſual; but Hannah was embarraſſed, and I believe would have preferred her ancient place in the kitchen, however ſhe might have been flattered with her tranſlation to the parlour.

Miſs Larimer was eaſily prevailed upon, after dinner, to give us a ſpecimen of her abilities on the pianoforte; the ſong then went round, and even Mrs. Larimer, who

was

was ſeated near the bride, exerted herſelf ſo as to give us the remains of a very ſweet voice, in two or three old ſongs well adapted to the occaſion. Harriet ſung the Wedding Day, and Mr. Ewer a tranſlation of that ſweet ſimple French ballad I have often heard you admire—Il faut attendre —I ſubjoin the words:

With patience wait to-morrow's coming,
To-morrow is the happy day,
'Twixt wedded and unwedded loving,
Great is the difference, they ſay.
Oh! if 'tis, ſure the marriage fetter
Muſt to our minds ſome change impart;
My love will only be the greater,
If I may judge from my own heart.

When Lewis ſays, my charming fair one,
I love thee, thee alone I love,
The anſwer 's—I need not prepare one,
I love thee far myſelf above.
He ſwears his love will laſt for ever,
And faithful Lewis knows no art;
Can he be falſe?—ah! no; ah, never!
If I may judge from my own heart.

When

When to my love my vows are given,
What cauſe have I for fear or ſhame?
I plight them in the ſight of Heaven;
I can't repent nor be to blame.
To be united, ne'er to ſever,
In tender ties, devoid of art,
Our bliſs muſt needs endure for ever,
If I may judge from my own heart.

He was much applauded and encored; but his ſpirits failed in the ſecond attempt, and he could not go through with it. Harriet, who was ſeated near him, wa the firſt to perceive his emotion; readily gueſsing the cauſe, ſhe aroſe and haſtily withdrew, for her tears of ſympathy were not to be reſtrained. "Ah, poor ſoul!" ſaid Mrs. Larimer, in a whiſper to me, "he is thinking of his own wedding day; when, perhaps, he might ſing this very ſong; 'tis a bitter recollection."

The reſt of the company, not being in the ſecret, were no more affected than it

is

is probable they might have been, had they known it all. Mr. Peterſon filled him a bumper, and deſired he would drink it off, and Mrs. P. requeſted he would begin again, and ſhe dared to ſay he would get through it. He did not, however, make the attempt, nor at all recover his ſpirits afterwards. The bride and bridegroom, accompanied by Miſs Anne, ſoon after ſet off to their new abode; the Larimers took the opportunity to retire unobſerved; Mr. Ewer eſcorted them. The reſt of the company ſpent the evening. Mr. T. Peterſon, with his conſort, would willingly have remained the night; but that was objected to on all hands. Cards and dancing filled up the evening, and continued till a late hour.

Thursday,

Thursday, Dec. 24.

As Harriet and I were ſitting at work together, yeſterday evening, (Mrs. Peterſon has enough to do to ſet her houſe to rights after the buſtle) ſhe was continually humming the tune of Mr. Ewer's ſong on the wedding-day. "Do, my dear," ſaid I to her, at length, "ſing it out, and I will endeavour to aſſiſt you in recollecting the words; the firſt time I heard that ſong, in French, I was ſo pleaſed with the ſweet natural ſimplicity of it, as to encore the ſinger three times running." Harriet bluſhed, and anſwered, that the tune ran in her head, but ſhe did not think ſhe could go through with it. She began, however, without further intreaty, and ſung the two firſt verſes nearly as I have written them; ſhe was going on with the third, contriving now and then to boggle a little, when ſhe ſuddenly ſtopped ſhort, ſaying ſhe was ſure ſhe

ſhe heard ſome one at the door; ſhe roſe to open it, and diſcovered in the attitude of a liſtener, Mr. Ewer himſelf.—"Will you forgive, Miſs Harriet," ſaid he, entering, "the magic, of your own ſpells—I was fixed here by the enchantment of ſweet ſounds." "It was not fair, Mr. Ewer," ſaid I, "nor quite good policy; for, from the ſong, we ſhould probably have been led to talk of the ſinger, and you might have heard yourſelf abuſed."—"I deſerve it, madam," returned he, "and ſhould have bowed my head ſubmiſſively to the correction; for cenſure from you, however juſt, I am ſure would be gentle; and, after ſuch ——" he broke off abruptly, aroſe, and walked about the room a few ſeconds in evident diſorder, returned, ſeated himſelf—"that ſong, Miſs Harriet, recalls ideas ſo painful,—" then roſe again—"forgive me—I'll endeavour to recover myſelf." He walked about with increaſed perturbation. Harriet, who from his firſt entrance had been all

all confuſion, was now all alarm; her eyes followed his uneaſy motions, and her colour continually changed; I made her a ſign to take no notice, and he at length recovered and ſeated himſelf tranquilly by me. He took up my work and looked at it, I believe, without ſeeing it, or knowing what he did. I let him alone a little, and then aſked him if he deſigned to help me? "I beg your pardon," ſaid he, laying it down; "no, I cannot help you indeed!" "Well then, don't hinder me, for I am making a new cap for Chriſtmas day, which, I hope you recollect, is the day after to-morrow."—"Yes," ſaid he, ſtill with an air of abſence, "let but to-morrow and to-morrow come—" then recollecting himſelf—"but how do you do after your fatigue, Mrs. Willars? Are you quite well and happy, as I wiſh you to be? Miſs Harriet looks pale, is ſhe not well?" Harriet, now no longer pale, aſſured him of her good health, and enquired after the Larimers.

mers. "I have juſt left them," ſaid he; "Mrs. L. is lame with the rheumatiſm, and her daughter fatigued. I have been to-day to M. with letters on their account. I have, myſelf, written a civil one to Mr. Larimer, informing him of the ſituation and diſtreſs of his family, as if I ſuppoſed him ignorant of it, and urging the neceſſity of a ſpeedy remittance: this I have incloſed to my correſpondent, who will likewiſe write on his part, and we ſhall wait the iſſue of this diſpatch."

We purſued this ſubject of converſation, which diverted him from referring to his own private ſorrows, and he was preſently himſelf; yet he talked on eagerly whenever a little pauſe occurred, as if afraid to truſt his recollection. Poor Ewer! how much he intereſts me! Why muſt that kind, benevolent heart, ſo feelingly alive to the diſtreſs of others, be never without its own? Yet affliction ſoftens, my Ed-

ward; very proſperous people are apt to have little feeling for adverſity, as very healthy ones for ſickneſs. How neceſſary then are the pangs of which we complain! Would I exchange tenderneſs, humanity, all the generous affections of the ſoul, all that is amiable in nature, for the gifts of fortune; which, if they do not find the heart already corrupted, too frequently make it ſo? O never, my Edward, not ſo would I purchaſe even thy return!

Friday, Dec. 25, Chriſtmas Day.

The intervals between the duties of the day I have employed in compoſing the following ſtanzas to the tune of the Eaſter Hymn. We have been ſinging them in chorus all the evening.

HYMN.

HYMN.

Sacred day of peace and joy, Allelujah.
All my faculties employ, Alle.
Bleſſed day, auſpicious morn! Alle.
When for us the Lord was born! Alle.

'Tis the day our Lord has made, Alle.
Glory to his name be paid, Alle.
Let's be glad, come let's rejoice, Alle.
Raiſe to Heav'n a cheerful voice. Alle.

Haſte, to Bethlehem repair, Alle.
Oh what wonders wait us there, Alle.
An infant god, in humble guiſe, Alle.
Poor and helpleſs weeping lies. Alle.

What, bleſt infant, do I ſee, Alle.
Is this dwelling meet for thee? Alle.
Brutes partake thy wretched ſhed, Alle.
And a manger is thy bed. Alle.

Lord of all things, can I ſee, Alle.
Thee in Beth'lem born for me, Alle.
Nor before thy infant ſhrine, Alle.
Ev'ry vanity reſign? Alle.

Here I then my pride depoſe, Alle.
And renounce my ſins, thy foes, Alle.
Proſtrate here I humbly pray, Alle.
Still to venerate this day, Alle.

Still to ſerve thee and adore, Alle.
Still to love thee more and more, Alle.
Still to ſeek thee as I roam, Alle.
'Till I come to Heav'n—my home! Allelujah.

May this day be happy to my Edward, prays his ever faithful

SOPHIA WILLARS.

Saturday, Dec. 26.

Mr. Allenden's ſteward dined here to-day; he gives but a very indifferent account of his employer's health, who, he ſays, has had another paralytic ſtroke.

Upon this account Mr. Peterſon is anxious to conclude a buſineſs wherein he is embarked; this is, to ſecure a ſmall farm for his ſon, which is to let, and is ſituate near his own. He is anxious to have a leaſe ſigned during the life of the preſent landlord. The ſteward promiſes to uſe all diſpatch. It is a dairy farm, and will call Mrs. T. Peterſon's talents into play. I heartily wiſh them proſperity and happineſs.

Sunday, Dec. 27.

I have juſt received a preſſing letter from your aunt, to attend her at Briſtol, whither ſhe is removed for the benefit of her health, which, ſhe ſays, is in a very declining ſtate. She charges me to make no delay, as I love her nephews. As I love my Edward!—what a charge! I ſleep to-night at M——,

to be in readineſs for the firſt coach that ſets off for London, whence, if it is poſſible, I ſhall take one of the night ſtages for Briſtol. Mr. Peterſon, who is anxious to ſee his landlord on the buſineſs I have mentioned, will attend me to town. There I am to meet ſome one from your aunt.

Adieu, my love! In attending upon her, I ſhall perſuade myſelf that I am ſerving you; for I know her of old, and am convinced that all my time muſt be devoted to her. I ſhall not be allowed to write.

Adieu, my Edward! my ſweet Harriet, my dear Larimers, my worthy Ewer; for a little while adieu!

Briſtol,

Bristol, Tuesday, Dec. 29.

I am ſafe arrived, my dear Edward, though ſomewhat fatigued. Mrs. Emſon ſeems glad to ſee me, and flattered at the diligence I have ſhewn. She is much altered, and very weak. As yet I am ignorant of the nature of her diſorder, though ſhe has been two hours explaining it to me; perhaps her phyſicians are in the ſame caſe, and that may be the reaſon why their remedies have hitherto proved ſo ineffectual.

Her temper is not improved; ſhe has already given me a ſpecimen of it. When I begged leave to quit her for a quarter of an hour to write to you,—ſhe anſwered, peeviſhly, "that ſhe wondered how I could be ſo ridiculous as to ſpend my time in writing letters that never would be received."

She inquires for me—Adieu.

Friday, Jan. 1.

" Oh, may the year we now renew,
" Be ſtor'd with happineſs for you!"

Sunday 10.

Your aunt allows me neither to read, write, nor work, nor to leave her at all, but for neceſſary repoſe, which ſhe takes care ſhall not be too long. She ſuffers a good deal from pain, and much more from impatience. She is every way a pitiable object. I am too happy to be able now and then to ſoothe or divert her; and when we talk of my Edward, though ſhe not unfrequently increaſes my uneaſineſs, by wondering that we do not hear from him.

Laſt

Laſt night, ſhe ſaid, ſhe was ſure you would write if you were alive, and frequently too; and that it was impoſſible all your letters ſhould miſcarry. She talked me into tears, and then ſcolded me for weeping.

I found an opportunity laſt week to write word of my ſafe arrival to Harriet. She anſwered me immediately.

I ſubjoin her affectionate letter, which I have not time to tranſcribe.

TO MRS. WILLARS.

How cruelly do I feel your abſence, my ever dear Mrs. Willars! and what a ſolitude is Southlands now! deprived as I am of the ſociety which has lately been all my happineſs. I ſeem to have loſt the half of my exiſtence: I wander about like a troubled ſpirit, and cannot ſettle to any thing. If

I attempt to read, I have no one to direct my ſtudies, to ſhare my amuſement, or to whom to impart my obſervations. Needle-work, after ſuch a companion to converſe with the while, is tedious and unintereſting. The weather is not favourable for walking; nor dare I venture beyond our incloſures alone.

My couſin is not returned; and if ſhe were, would not be of much reſource to to me after what I have loſt. I fear to ſeek Miſs Larimer, who could beſt ſupply it; for the only time I ventured there I met Mr. Ewer. Her mother is laid up with the rheumatiſm, and cannot be left. Thus am I every way forlorn.

Poor Sappho, whom you were ſo good as to leave, follows me about, and ſeems to ſeek you every where. I love the poor creature, becauſe it ſeems to miſs you almoſt as much as I: and when I ſay Sappho, poor

poor Sappho, where is your miſtreſs? ſhe runs to the door, then back again, looks me earneſtly in the face, and ſets up a fond diſtreſsful cry, in which my heart bears chorus.

My uncle is returned from London; he has ſettled the buſineſs of the farm; and my couſin Thomas is to move there directly. I have been to ſee his wife; though I own I had ſome repugnance to couſin her; however, as long as ſhe is not to live with us, the matter is ſupportable. The bride folks dined here laſt Sunday. The lady receives company this week. I do not envy her, nor couſin Anne, the ceremony. I am obliged to ſhorten this letter, which I would willingly ſcribble on, for this is the only pleaſant employment I can find; but Mr. Ewer is below, and offers to take it to the poſt, as he is going to M. He deſires his beſt reſpects; ſighing, from the bottom

of his heart, at the name of Briſtol. He too regrets your abſence, and already complains of its length. Why are his feelings ſo conſonant to mine!

Adieu, my beſt beloved, my ever dear friend! Pray ſteal from your pious employment a few minutes, if it is only to write three lines, in compaſſion to your poor forlorn, and tenderly affectionate

HARRIET PETERSON.

P. S. If you knew with what delight I received your laſt! My uncle and aunt ſend kind compliments.

Friday, Jan. 29.

Poor Mrs. Emſon grows evidently worſe: ſhe fainted yeſterday on her return from an

an airing, whither, as uſual, I had accompanied her.

I am not more at liberty.

Saturday, Feb. 13.

My patient is now half her time in bed: She is leſs peeviſh, and more compoſed. I know not if it is a good ſign. I hear from Harriet twice a-week regularly. She is ſo good as to excuſe my anſwers, ſince ſhe knows how I am ſituated. She tells me nothing new, except that Mrs. Thomas Peterſon is brought to bed of a ſon.

Wednesday,

Wednesday, 24.

I am juſt returned from the city, whither I was ſent to purchaſe ſome Welſh flannel for Mrs. Emſon. I ſaw ſome very ſoft and beautiful, and was induced to lay out part of a preſent, in money, which your aunt had given me, in buying a little ſtock of it for Mrs. Larimer, who ſuffers continually from attacks of the rheumatiſm.

I was putting up my purſe, and preparing to depart, when a buſtle at the further end of the ſhop, which was very long, excited my attention: it was occaſioned by the ſudden fainting of a lady who was making ſome purchaſes. As I haſtened, with others, to offer my ſmelling bottle and aſſiſtance, I ſaw her perſon, and heard her name; the laſt of which ſtruck me, though I did not immediately recollect where

where I had heard it: and this is the reaſon of my noticing the circumſtance. She was a delicate little woman, with pretty features, and extremely thin: her dreſs the moſt elegant that a morning diſhabillé could admit of.

Mrs. Folwing's ſervant was called, and ſent for a chair; for though her carriage was in waiting, ſhe was unable to ſit up, or bear the motion of it. The man ſaid that his miſtreſs, who was at Briſtol for her health, had been to a ball the preceding evening, and danced very much, notwithſtanding the remonſtrances of her huſband, who could not prevail upon her to take the precautions her weak ſtate of health ſo much required.

The turn of mind, as well as the name of this lady, leads me to ſuſpect ſhe is Miſs Larimer's old friend. I wiſh I had any means of aſcertaining it; for I ſhould then,

then, without ſcruple, have Mrs. Larimer's caſe repreſented to her and her huſband; not doubting but it would procure ſome relief from ſuch old and intimate acquaintances: but we live here ſo totally unknowing and unknown, that I have little chance of obtaining any ſatisfactory intelligence; and Mrs. Emſon grows ſo much worſe, that I have as little inclination to leave her, in queſt of any, as ſhe can have to let me go.

Thurſday, Feb. 25.

At length, my deareſt Edward,—I have the happineſs to receive a letter from you, dated the 3d of January: the others that you mention have never come to hand; this, indeed, is but the ſecond that I received ſince your departure. It has been to Southlands, and is ſent here; the direction

tion altered, without being incloſed in a cover. Your aunt is much gratified to hear that two months ago you were ſafe and well. Your Sophia ſighs to think what may have happened ſince! You complain of not hearing from me, yet tell me it is in vain to write, as you are continually cruizing, and have no chance of receiving any letters. Methinks yours ſeems ſad.—Alas, my love! were you indeed well when you wrote it?

It was thought your ſhip would have been ſent home with diſpatches, being a quick ſailer, you ſay; and you will not tell me how much you were concerned, and diſappointed, that the ſcheme failed. I thank you, my love, for all the kind things you ſay, and the kind charges you give me. Yes, I *will* take care of my health for your ſake:—I *will* be exact in keeping my journal, when I can, ſince it is for your ſatisfaction. With regard to your recommendation

recommendation of poor Sailor, it was needleſs; if yet it could be of ſervice to him--But his ſad ſtory you will learn too ſoon.

East Grove, Tuesday, March 1.

We quitted Briſtol ſuddenly, my dear Edward. Your aunt, ſenſible of her danger, inſiſted, Thurſday evening, on being removed the next day, while ſhe was yet able to bear the journey, that ſhe might cloſe her eyes at home. — We travelled rather faſter than you would have ſuppoſed poſſible, her weak ſtate conſidered; for early in the afternoon of Tueſday, we arrived hither. You know the diſtance; her impatience to be at home ſupported her through the fatigue: but ſhe feels it ſeverely now, and is extremely ill. I

ſcarce

ſcarce ever leave her. She deſired me to write to her ſon immediately on her arrival. I took that opportunity of acquainting Harriet with my removal.

Adieu—I muſt return to my ſad taſk.

March 11.

Poor Mrs. Emſon cannot now quit her bed at all: mine is placed in the room near hers; and I watch her night and day. Her maid relieves me a little; but ſhe will not hear of a nurſe. Her phyſicians give her up; however, they are of opinion that ſhe may yet linger ſome time. Her ſon is arrived.

Sunday,

Sunday, March 14.

I have juſt received this letter from Harriet.

Southlands, March 10.

I hope my ever kind and dear Mrs. Willars has duly received a foreign letter, which, ſuppoſing to be from a much-loved hand, I immediately diſpatched, without allowing myſelf the indulgence of writing a few lines by way of envelope. It ſo happened that Mr. Ewer was here when it arrived: He ſaid he was going to M— with letters, and offered to take it. I altered the direction, and committed it to his care.

It appears that he went from hence to Mrs. Larimer's: he ſaid where he was going, and offered to do any commiſſion for her.

You

You will wonder why I am thus particular; but my dear, dear friend, this poor man has not ſince been heard of. He did not return to his lodgings, though it ſhould appear that he had no intention of quitting them; for his books and papers were left careleſsly about, his drawers all unlocked, and no linen, as it ſhould ſeem, taken away.

The next day Mrs. Clarke ſent here to know if we could give any intelligence of him; ſhe ſent likewiſe to Mrs. Larimer's, and wherever he was accuſtomed to reſort; but all to as little purpoſe as here. He owes her ſome money; but as he has left effects to much more than the amount, they cannot ſay he is gone away upon that account. Indeed, my dear friend, I cannot help being exceſſively uneaſy; and if it was not for the Larimers, my heart would burſt.—To their lodgings I *now* can go without fear of indecorum; but that is a poor compenſation

penſation for the anxiety I muſt bear till this ſtrange buſineſs is explained.

They have been dragging the water in ſearch of him. Only think, my dear friend, what a horrible idea! others ſearch the wood, prepoſſeſſed that they ſhall find the unfortunate man hanging there; for ſeveral perſons pretend they ſaw him returning from M— late on the evening that he was firſt miſſing.

Some impertinent people, of whom our near neighbour is one, have been to Mrs. Clarke's to rummage his papers and effects. He has left even his flute.

The poor Larimers are, as you may ſuppoſe, deeply affected at this ſudden diſappearance of ſo dear and valuable a friend. I do not ſcruple to mix my tears with theirs; and that is all my conſolation.

" I dread

"I dread ſome fatal accident," Mrs. Larimer ſays; "for ſure nothing leſs could prevent Mr. Ewer's giving ſome account of himſelf to friends whoſe anxiety he muſt imagine." Miſs Larimer weeps in ſilence. Only think, my dear Mrs. Willars, what daggers to me is all this. The very goſſiping of the pariſh, though teazing, is ſome relief; and all the ill-natured obſervations I am conſtrained to hear, do not pain me like the apprehenſions I am conſtrained to feel.

Write to me, my dear friend; your pen flows with balm always. Write, I intreat you; aſſure me of your regard, your health, and welfare; and your poor Harriet will endeavour to be not quite miſerable.

I leave you to anſwer this letter, my dear Edward, in order to adminiſter to my friends, and thoſe of Mr. Ewer, the comfort my reflections ſuggeſt. If any bad accident

accident had befallen him, it would have been known ere this. It is probable that he met with ſome letter on his arrival at M—, which might require his immediate attendance. He might not have had time or opportunity to ſend word of his buſineſs.—In the abſence of mind, cauſed by hurry and agitation, he might not think of it. It was, perhaps, on ſome buſineſs of Mrs. Larimer's.

My mind is cool; and I ſee nothing ſo extraordinary in all this. I dare ſay he has been heard of before now.

Monday, March 22.

You know your couſin, my dear Edward, and will not be ſurpriſed to hear, that he is not extremely civil to me: he has

has given me ſeveral hints that my attendance here could be diſpenſed with. He obſerved immediately, upon his arrival, what a very good opportunity there was for a perſon to go a part of the way to London in the return-chaiſe. He, probably, is afraid that my preſence ſhould remind his mother of you; and, as ſhe is ſuppoſed to have ſome ready money to diſpoſe of, ſhe might be inclined to beſtow it there, where it is wanted moſt; and, rich as he is, he cannot bear the leaſt trifle ſhould eſcape him. I ſhall, however, remain here as long as your aunt is ſenſible, and appears to deſerve it; at preſent ſhe cannot bear me out of her ſight; and will hold my hand, for half an hour together, as if ſhe were afraid I ſhould eſcape her.

Wednesday 23.

I never was extremely fond of your aunt, my dear Edward; you know her temper is not amiable; but I cannot ſee her in the ſtate in which ſhe now lies, without being deeply affected, and feeling as if I loved her. I ſit weeping by her bed-ſide, where ſhe no longer knows me, nor any one elſe. She lies in a kind of ſtupor. If I offer to give her any thing, it is ſnatched out of my hand by Mrs. Martha, her woman, who has her orders from Mr. Emſon—with "ſure, Madam, I can wait upon my miſtreſs." I have as little inclination as ſpirits to reſent this at preſent. I find the aſpect of a death-bed ſoftens my heart, and ſweetens all aſperity; and as I never had a thought of intereſt in the attentions I have paid your aunt, I can forgive thoſe who can conceive no other ſpring of action.

My

My Edward will thank me when he returns, and I ſhall be repaid.

Thursday 24.

I have watched all night, my love, for the laſt time.—My painful taſk is at an end. Your poor relation requires no more of my ſervices.

London, Friday, March 25.

I write from the inn, where I am to ſpend the night; for, would you believe it, my love, before your aunt was well cold, Mr. Emſon ſent a meſſage to me by Mrs. Martha, his mother's maid, import-

ing, that he was too much grieved to ſee me himſelf?—that as he could not expect it would be agreeable to me to ſtay in the houſe of death, he had ordered his mother's carriage to take me to M— whence I ſhould eaſily find a conveyance to London? He thanked me for my attendance on his mother; and added, that when he had reſolution enough to open her will, he would order his attorney to make me acquainted with the contents.

You will conclude I did not delay to make the neceſſary arrangements for my departure: I was off in half an hour; and here I am juſt arrived extremely fatigued, but not ill: a good night's reſt will ſet me to rights again. I ſhall ſurpriſe the family at Southlands, to whom I have not had an opportunity of giving notice of my removal. I hope, however, that it will be agreeable. I enjoy, by anticipation, the ſatisfaction it will give my dear Harriet.

This

This little ſeparation has but increaſed our tender friendſhip.

Oh! with what pleaſure ſhall I ſee her!

Sunday 27.

It was late when I arrived at M— yeſterday; and I had travelled half the way alone. Sick of inns and ſolitude, I immediately ordered a chaiſe, and ſpeedily greeted, with inexpreſſible ſatisfaction, the lights of my rural retreat.

The unuſual ſound of wheels, at ten o'clock at night, was ſoon proclaimed by the watchful houſe-dogs. I thought I could diſtinguiſh Sappho's little voice from among the reſt. Even the darkneſs

and ſtillneſs that prevailed at intervals, had power to intereſt me.

The chaiſe drove up at length. "Tell Miſs Harriet it is Mrs. Willars," called out Sally. The dear girl could hardly believe her; but was ſoon convinced in my arms. She wept for joy, and ſo did I. After ſaluting the family, who ſeemed glad to ſee me, my firſt inquiries were after Mr. Ewer; but it appears he has not been heard of.—He's gone off, poor man! ſaid Mrs. Peterſon, left all he had though, to pay his way, ſo that he's honeſt, however.

Some people think, ſaid her huſband, he only left it, becauſe he could not carry it away; but that's his buſineſs. Miſs Anne added, that ſhe heard Mrs. Clarke was about to ſell his books and effects; for nobody thought he would ever return again. I obſerved, that it would be rather precipitate; and that I did not

think ſuch a proceeding juſtifiable: that, for my own part, I had no doubt of his returning.

From the poſitive manner of my ſpeaking, they all concluded that I knew ſomething about him; and began to queſtion me in conſequence. I was forced to proteſt my ignorance.

I have ſeen the Larimers, who are in good health, and who welcomed my unexpected return, with a delight which I moſt heartily partook. The converſation ſoon turned upon the unaccountable diſappearance of our common friend, which had given them ſo much alarm and concern. I conſoled them in ſome ſort, by inſiſting upon the probability of his ſpeedy return. "Some unforeſeen buſineſs," I ſaid, "has certainly hurried him away; and he neglects to write, becauſe he expects every day to return." "Why, that is true,

honey, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Larimer; "I wonder we never thought of it before; but this dear ſoul is always ſo full of comfort."

She then informed me that the pariſh officers had been with her landlady, with threats, that if ſhe did not ſend away her lodgers, they would turn her out of the pariſh; alledging, that they expected the old woman would ſoon become chargeable.

Mrs. Hall, who is regularly paid, and not eaſily frightened, laughed at their menace; but ſhe repeated them coarſely enough to her poor broken-ſpirited lodgers, to whom they were a ſevere mortification. "Alas, my dear Madam!" ſaid Miſs Larimer, "both our good friends abſent—what could we do? Indeed, but for Miſs Harriet, we had died broken-hearted." I ſaid, ſuch impotent malice was only deſerving of contempt; and, after a long

a long viſit, took my departure, leaving the Welch flannel, directed for Mrs. Larimer, with Mrs. Hall.

I employed myſelf afterwards in looking out my mourning; and, with Harriet's aſſiſtance, put it on to-day.

Monday 28.

I am returned to rural delights at a moſt intereſting ſeaſon.—How have theſe months changed to advantage the lovely face of nature! How ſtriking is the alteration! all that ſeemed dead is now reviving: the trees are budding; the wheat is peeping; ſweet violets and primroſes are perfuming the air: birds chearfully warbling: all is young verdure, tender joy and beauty.

Soon ſhall the young ambroſial ſpring,
Wanton forth in garlands gay;
And ſpreading ſoft her virgin wing,
Shall wed the Lord of day.

G. DYER.

Harriet is, as uſual, my conſtant companion: but the enlivening breath of ſpring fails of its effect upon her. She is ſilent, abſent, and ſad; and when I point out to her obſervation ſome beauty of the ſcene, ſhe ſmiles faintly, and ſays coldly, "it is very pretty indeed."

I have juſt been dragging her to my grove, which Mr. Peterſon civilly ſays, waits my orders to be adorned. In vain I endeavoured to intereſt her, by conſulting her opinion on the plan we ſhould adopt. She appears to notice nothing; and forces herſelf to anſwer, ſometimes, when I am perſuaded ſhe has not heard what has been ſaid. It is far otherwiſe with me; juſt eſcaped

eſcaped from the gloomy confinement of a ſick chamber, I feel, with redoubled energy, the charms of ſpring. I ſeem to be new born with nature; the vrieſt trifle has power to intereſt and delight me.

Ah, my dear Harriet! I ſay, we make to ourſelves imaginary woes. Had you been, like me, ſo long familiar with ſickneſs and death, how would the life and health of every plant and inſect which the glorious ſun reanimates, have power to delight and revive you! She droops her head, but makes no anſwer. Soon after, the odour of ſome violets attracting her notice, ſhe ran and gathered ſome for me: "Do you know," ſaid ſhe, "what this flower reminds me of; and that it is properly your emblem?" Why ſo, my dear?

"One evening, in your abſence, we were playing at "What's my thought like?"

In my turn I naturally thought of you.—The compariſon was a violet.—Nothing can be more apt, ſaid Mr. Ewer, whoſe turn it was; both are ſweet, modeſt and retired; both muſt be ſought, and are ſure to be prized when found."—I ſmiled—and ſhe went on.

"Indeed, my dear Mrs. Willars, you have no notion what a high opinion he has of you; and it is this conformity of ſentiment which makes him ſo agreeable to me.—He often uſed to ſay, he never ſaw a maſculine underſtanding united with ſuch truly feminine ſweetneſs." I bid the flatterer be ſilent, Edward, though I was far from being inſenſible to the incenſe of ſo ſweet a hand: and it urged me, unconſcious, to talk on the only ſubject ſhe was to liſten to with intereſt.

How

How vain you will think me, Edward, to repeat all theſe fine things! Yes, of the praiſe of thoſe I value, I am vain indeed!

Tuesday 29.

I have juſt received a letter which came to M— by yeſterday's poſt, from Mr. Emſon's attorney, who proves to be Mr. Allenden's ſteward, Mr. Amrode. He acquaints me, from his employer, that Mrs. Emſon has bequeathed me 2000l. and in a codicil, bearing date, Feb. 24, 17—, the ſum of 1200l. to me, independent of you—mark that, Edward! Her watch, trinkets, and my choice of her cloaths, and 50l. for mourning, to be immediately paid. Every thing elſe, except ſome trifling legacies to ſervants, to her ſon, who is ſole executor.

Mr.

Mr. Amrode desires to know to whom I would have the fifty pounds paid in London; and that I would send word immediately what part of Mrs. Emson's wardrobe I choose to have set apart for me. I have desired him, in my answer, to keep the money till he comes here at quarter day; and, for the cloaths, I have chosen three good silk gowns, which I have described. Two of them I mean for Mrs. and Miss Larimer; the third I shall keep in memory of the donor; and likewise a handsome sattin cloak—this is all. Mrs. Martha will have reason to be satisfied with my moderation.

I was at a loss to think when your poor aunt could have found an opportunity of adding the codicil in my favour, as I never quitted her; yet never heard the least intimation of it. On referring to my journal, I find it was the day she sent me out under pretence of making some purchases, when I told

I told you I met with Mrs. Folwing. The delicacy of this proceeding adds infinitely to my gratitude for it.

Mr. Emſon was probably in the ſecret of the codicil, and might think that I was ſo too; and that I attended his mother from motives of intereſt. How little does this young man reſemble his couſin, and how incapable is he of judging either of us! I remember the character you long ſince gave me of him, and am not ſurpriſed:—that he was cold in temper and conſtitution, ſober, prudent, and regular; but ſelfiſh, avaricious, deſigning, and as incapable of a liberal ſentiment as of a generous action. He had no ſenſual vice; you ſaid his vices were thoſe of the heart: the leaſt ſcandalous, it is true; but we have the beſt authority to pronounce them the moſt criminal.

To-morrow

To-morrow I purpoſe going to M— to provide handſome mourning. I could ſhift with what I have; but would wiſh to do honour to the memory of my generous benefactreſs.

How ardently do I wiſh your return, my deareſt Edward! with this addition to our little income, we could ſet fortune at defiance; and I hope you would quit your Sophia no more.

Alas! I cannot even make you acquainted with it. I ſhall, however, riſk a line by every packet. Adieu!

———

Thurſday, March 30.

I flouriſh away upon the ſtrength of my legacy, Edward. Yeſterday I ſent for a chaiſe

chaiſe from M— and went thither, accompanied by Mrs. Larimer and Harriet; the latter of whom I almoſt conſtrained to go. I ordered chickens at the inn, while we ſtrolled about and made our purchaſes. I bought a ſmart bonnet for Harriet, and one for Miſs Larimer, and we made out the day. The ride was of ſervice to Mrs. Larimer, who, notwithſtanding all her reluctance to accept of it, appeared to enjoy it very much; ſhe ate a hearty dinner, and was extremely cheerful.

I likewiſe bought a preſent of ſome fine tea for Mrs. Peterſon, and, upon the ſtrength of it, took up Miſs Larimer on our return, and engaged both daughter and mother to taſte it. We found a large party already aſſembled—the two Mr. Groves, their ſiſter, and Mr. Deacon. We were hardly ſeated when the elder Grove aſked me with a ſneer, if I had not ſeen Mr. Ewer in my travels, "for if you can give no account of

of him," ſaid he, "I'm afraid we muſt give him up for loſt, and that would be a ſad job, would it not, Miſs Harriet?"—"I dares ſay," ſaid Deacon, "that Miſs Harriet has more ſenſe than for to care about him, a poor runaway that nobody knows."—"I beg pardon, ſir," ſaid Mrs. Larimer, "but I can aſſure you that Mr. Ewer is well known to many people of the firſt character and conſequence; and if he concealed himſelf here, it muſt be becauſe it was his own choice."

"For good reaſons, no doubt, he came here," ſaid Miſs Grove; "and for good reaſons, I ſuppoſe, he has taken himſelf away; but except you, or ſome of the people of conſequence to whom he is known, chooſe to pay his debts, the few trifles and trumpery he has left will be ſold for that purpoſe to-morrow. I went to ſee what there was—but I really would not give

five

five ſhillings for the whole; I'm afraid poor Mrs. Clarke will be a great loſer."

"She deſerves to be ſo," ſaid I, "if ſhe is really in ſuch haſte to diſpoſe of his property. If I underſtand right, he has not been abſent quite a month; ſurely ſhe might wait that time." "Wait and get nothing," ſaid Grove; "perhaps have other creditors come and ſeize the little there is; for my part, I have no doubt that he has been arreſted, and clapped into jail." "That would be no reaſon for his ſilence," ſaid I; "in ſuch a caſe he would ſurely have written to require his linen at leaſt."

Miſs Grove thought it probable that his friends, if he had any, might have contrived to have him ſecured, and popt into a mad-houſe.—"He certainly was not in his right mind; for her part, ſhe had often been

been afraid of him, with his melancholy looks."

Mrs. Peterſon added her obſervation: "that, to be ſure, poor man, he had an oddiſh look at times, and ſeemed ſo moping-like, that, for her part, ſhe was afraid he had made away with himſelf." "I am not at all afraid of that, Madam," ſaid Mrs. Larimer; "I know poor Mr. Ewer's was a hard lot; but he knew how to bear it like a man and a Chriſtian; and however he is to be lamented, he is not to be deſpiſed."

"Well, but then, goody Larimer," ſaid the inſolent Grove, "how do you account for his ſtrange diſappearance? Since you won't allow of any of our conjectures, let's hear ſome of yours.—If you are in the ſecret, you might as well out with it at once.—Tell us what's become of the man?" "I wiſh I could," anſwered mildly

ly Mrs. Larimer; "infirm as I am, I would walk barefooted to M — to do him the leaſt ſervice, or even but to know what is become of him." "You go to M — to do him ſervice! what good can old women do? Send your daughter, perhaps ſhe knows a little about his haunts.—Hey, my girl, are you in the ſecret of his haunts?"

Miſs Larimer, who is happily ignorant of the reports that have been circulated at her expence, did not feel the whole force of this impertinent addreſs; diſguſted, however, at the freedom of it, ſhe looked hurt; but made no anſwer.

The tea things being introduced, I roſe, and requeſted that I and my friends might be ſerved in my own apartment. Harriet ſeconded the motion, and offered to wait upon us. Mrs. Peterſon objected; I inſiſted;

ſiſted; and, in the buſtle of the diſpute, the door opened, unheard; and who ſhould appear, pale as a marble ſtatue, and thinner than ever, in the garb of deep mourning, but Mr. Ewer himſelf! I will not attempt to deſcribe the effect of this ſudden apparition upon the company, of whom a few were delighted, and all aſtoniſhed beyond the force of compariſon. He bowed to Mrs. Peterſon and the reſt; but before he could addreſs his own friends particularly, Harriet, clinging for ſupport to Miſs Larimer, had fainted quite away.

Mr. Ewer was not the laſt to perceive it; he flew to her relief, and, as he ſupported her lifeleſs in his arms, wetted her pale cheek with his tears. This ſcene, however, laſted but an inſtant. Mrs. Peterſon interpoſed, and ordered her to be taken out of the room. "What ails the girl," ſaid ſhe, "I have no notion of ſuch airs.

airs. Pray, Sir, let her go, ſhe has relations to help her, if ſhe wants help; or here's Mr. Deacon will be ſo good."

Mr. Deacon was called two or three times before he would undertake the ſervice required of him, to help to carry out his miſtreſs; and when at laſt he ventured to take hold of her it was ſo awkwardly, he ſeemed every moment as if he would let her down: he puffed and blowed as if ſhe had weighed twenty ſtone; and but for anxiety, I could have laughed outright.

Mr. Ewer, who had immediately given up his charge on Mrs. Peterſon's remonſtrance, ſtood trembling with impatience at his awkward ſubſtitute. Harriet was, however, ſufficiently recovered before they got her out of the room, to walk with the aſſiſtance of her couſin's arm and mine. I helped to lay her on the bed; and when ſhe was better, returned to the company.

The

The tea was pouring out; and I conſented that my friends ſhould take it below.

Mr. Ewer was talking earneſtly, but in a low voice, to Mrs. Larimer; the reſt of the company, with eyes, and ears, and mouth wide open, were endeavouring to catch what he ſaid. When I entered, he addreſſed me with kind inquiries after my health. "If you have condeſcended to think about me, Madam," ſaid he, "my ſudden diſappearance muſt have ſurpriſed you, though you were abſent at the time." "It not only ſurpriſed me, Mr. Ewer," ſaid I, "but grieved and alarmed me, as well as your other friends, pointing to the Larimers; and now that I ſee you returned ſafe and well, I feel half inclined to quarrel with you. Could you not find a moment to write? Have you had your hands tied, or been debarred the uſe of pen, ink, and paper? Do you know that your landlady was on the point of ſelling

all

all your effects?" This intelligence appeared to ſurpriſe him.

"I cannot blame her for taking care of herſelf," ſaid he; "but I thought, when I was able to think about it, that not hearing from me, ſhe would naturally expect me every day; and, when I obeyed the ſummons of the letter which hurried me away ſo ſuddenly, I had little reaſon to expect I ſhould have been delayed ſo long. Another time, Madam, if you will give me leave, the whole ſhall be explained to you."

"Have you buried a near relation, Sir?" ſaid Mrs. Peterſon; "I ſees you are in deep mourning." Mr. Ewer bowed aſſent.—"Your father or mother, perhaps?" continued ſhe. "It was my misfortune to loſe both when I was very young, Madam," ſaid he. "What then, your wife?"

ſaid Grove. Mr. Ewer was ſilent; indeed the manner of his mourning indicated nothing leſs. Deacon now ventured to put in a word:—"Pray, Sir, is it your wife that you are in mourning for?" "Yes, Sir," ſaid Mr. Ewer, in a tone of voice that precluded all further inquiry.

I ſoon after retired to ſee my patient, whom I found ſitting up and taking her tea; but too much ſhocked at the accident that had befallen her, to bear the thought of returning to the company. I told her that it appeared Mr. Ewer's buſineſs had been to bury his wife.—She took no notice.

The Larimers now came to ſee her; they ſat by her till it grew duſk; and then recollecting that Mr. Ewer was waiting to ſee them home, wiſhed us good night.

I remained

I remained with Harriet, endeavouring to divert her diſtreſs; but failed totally in my attempt. The ſhock of having betrayed too great an intereſt in Mr. Ewer, quite overcame the pleaſure of his return. She ſaid not a word of him; and appeared mortified and abaſhed beyond meaſure, if I happened to mention his name. She is ſomething better to-day, but ſtill very low ſpirited and pale. She deſires to be excuſed going with me to Mrs. Larimers.

I am juſt returned. I had no doubt but Mr. Ewer had imparted his affairs there—he had ſo; and even requeſted the ladies to communicate them to me, to ſpare him a ſecond relation. It is too late to write it now, and I am tired.—Adieu.

Friday, April 1.

Mrs. Larimer informs me, that the letter which hurried Mr. Ewer ſo precipitately away, was a penitent one from his wife, then dying of a putrid fever. He ſhewed it to Mrs. Larimer, who has promiſed to procure me a ſight of it. The unfortunate woman confeſt her errors, implored his forgiveneſs; and beſought him, as he hoped for peace and pardon at his laſt hour, not to withhold them from her; and, above all, not to loſe an inſtant, if he meant to comply with her requeſt.

Forgetful juſt then of every thing but her, he procured poſt-horſes immediately, without an idea of the ſurpriſe his ſudden flight might occaſion, or of any thing, but of uſing all poſſible diſpatch to her relief. He never reſted till he reached Briſtol, where

where ſhe was.—He found her attended only by ſervants, all ſtrangers to him. He ſent word that a friend was come in obedience to her ſummons, and waited for admittance. She fainted at the news, and could not ſee him for ſome hours. At length ſhe ſent to intreat his preſence.—Their meeting he did not attempt to deſcribe; the remembrance alone quite unmanned him.

It appears, that he never left her afterwards while ſhe exiſted. His arrival ſeemed at firſt to have wrought her cure: ſhe got ſome quiet ſleep; and was ſo much better, that her phyſicians flattered him ſhe might recover. It is probable, that the agitation it cauſed prolonged her life, for ſhe lingered many days, ſtruggling between life and death; her ſpirit ſeeming to cling to its ſupporter, as if, ſo lately recovered, it could not loſe its hold: a death-like ſtupor ſucceeded to this temporary revival;

and ſhe expired the 14th ultimo in his arms.

Her pitiable ſtate, her grief and contrition, had awakened all his former tenderneſs; he felt the ſhock almoſt as if it had happened in the early ſtage of their happineſs. Overwhelmed with diſtreſs, it never once occurred to him, what would be the conſequence of the aſtoniſhment his ſilence muſt excite. After three days, devoted, as he ſaid, to unbounded grief, he recollected himſelf enough to give the neceſſary orders for her interment. He followed her to the grave: he had well nigh followed her there indeed; for he had taken the infection of her diſorder, and was ſeized with very alarming ſymptoms immediately on his return. His head was ſo violently affected, as to render him incapable either of writing or giving orders. For five days his life was deſpaired of; and he thinks he owes it to the care of a woman

man, who had formerly been his houſe-keeper.

"I recovered, however," ſaid he, "and haſtened to my retreat, with all that grief and ſickneſs have left of me."

Miſs Larimer has juſt brought me Mrs. Ewer's letter, which I take the liberty of copying.

TO MR. EWER.

"I am dying—a putrid fever has hurried me, unprepared, in three days, to the gates of death, whence I feel I ſhall never return. In other circumſtances I had not dared to addreſs you.

"I intreat, I implore your pity, your pardon; if poſſible, your preſence. Oh! if all remembrance of me be not hateful to you—as you hope for peace and pardon

at your laſt hour, haſten with them to me. Death's agonies are upon me; guilt and remorſe add to their ſtings. Oh, haſten, or you will be too late!"

Saturday, April 2.

The ſteward has been here and paid my fifty pounds.—He ſays Mr. Allenden is ſomewhat better, and is gone to Bath. I have likewiſe received my half year from Mr. G. I have paid my board, and am ſtill quite rich. Harriet readily agreed to attend me in a ſtroll round the village, in queſt of objects in want of the relief I can now ſo well afford to beſtow. We went firſt to Sally's mother, where a ſmall preſent proved a very ſeaſonable relief. I had complied with her invitation to be ſeated, and

and was liſtening to a detail of her complaints, when Harriet, who ſtood with an abſent look at the window, ſuddenly turned round, changing colour, and expreſſing ſome impatience to be gone. The cauſe of her emotion was ſoon explained, for the door opened, and in walked Mr. Ewer.—His colour roſe a little as he begged pardon for his intruſion.

"I ought not to be ſurpriſed, ladies," ſaid he, "to meet you at ſuch a place; but, indeed, I did not expect it." I anſwered in my uſual way; but Harriet made a ſtiff curtchey, and looked like an idiot. Mr. Ewer did not preſume, as he would ſome time ago have done, to aſk the cauſe. He kept the courſe her looks ſeemed to preſcribe; and did not even offer to eſcort us home.

I can read poor Harriet's little innocent heart pretty clearly by this time. I ſaw

ſhe was ſorely mortified: the tears ſtood in her eyes; nor did ſhe venture beyond a monoſyllable all the way home, or they muſt have overflowed.

Sunday 3.

Mr. and Mrs. Bertram dined here to-day. They were both ſtruck with Harriet's altered looks. "What is the matter with couſin Harriet?" ſaid Mr. B. "ſhe looks as if ſhe could not help it—ſhe muſt go home with us to change the air." They accordingly took her with them; ſhe appearing to go with pleaſure. They went early; and I have been to ſee the Larimers.

Monday

Monday 4.

I went this afternoon with Miſs Peterſon to drink tea at the mill. The Groves and Bennets were there; and all the converſation was of Mr. Ewer. "No wonder," ſaid Grove, "he was in ſuch a hurry to be gone, when it was to bury his wife; now I can't conceive a pleaſanter buſineſs than that."

"Why, yes," ſaid Mr. Bennet, "'tis *ſartinly* the beſt day's work a man can do; but what ſurpriſes me is, that folks ſays, his comed back as molloncholy again as he went." "That's ſtrange, indeed," obſerved Miſs Grove, "for one would think that if he had cared for his wife, he would not have ran away from her; and if he did not, that he would have been glad to be rid of her: but you men are ſuch ſtrange

creatures!" "We can neither live with you nor without you, my dear," ſaid Mr. Figgins, the father.

"How is Miſs Harriet after her faintings?" ſaid Miſs Grove to Miſs Peterſon: "I did not know ſhe had been ſubject to fits." "My couſin has not been well lately," anſwered ſhe; "ſhe is gone home with my ſiſter for change of air." Miſs Grove now whiſpered ſomething to Miſs Figgins. "I can't think what ſhould induce Ewer to ſtay here now," ſaid the elder Grove, "nor what he lives upon.—I have heard his wife was a jointured widow, and ſupported him; but there muſt be an end to all that now."

"May be he thinks to pick up a girl with money," ſaid one of the company. "He's come to the wrong place for that," anſwered another. "Women are ſuch curſed fools," ſaid Grove, "or he would

be

be in the wrong place every where."—Miſs Peterſon ſaid, ſhe thought Mr. Ewer was a man that any woman might like. This obſervation, dropt innocently enough, offended all the men preſent: they ſeemed to take it as a reflection on them, and unanimouſly reprobated her taſte; and adviſed her to conceal it, if ſhe would not ſpoil her fortune.

Mr. J. Grove ſeemed particularly picqued; and deſired her to point out what there was in Mr. Ewer to admire. "Why, Miſs Nancy, he is neither young, nor gay, nor rich, nor handſome; and nobody knows who, or what." "I have no doubt of his being a gentleman," returned ſhe. "Perhaps, Sir," ſaid I, "you and Miſs Peterſon may not perfectly agree in opinion as to what conſtitutes that character. I believe ſhe has a notion that it is integrity of principle, liberality of ſentiment, and urbanity of man's heart; whereas many

people make it to conſiſt wholly in fortune." "Why really, Ma'am," ſaid Miſs Grove, taking up the cudgels for her brother, "You will find it difficult to convince us ignorant people that a man of ample fortune is not a gentleman, or that one who lives upon his wits, *is* one."

"I aſſured her I was not diſpoſed to make ſo vain an attempt; and the converſation took another turn.

Miſs Peterſon continued ſilent and dejected the remainder of the viſit. No one offered to ſee us home, though it was a civility that might have been expected from the Groves, as it could take them but little out of their way. My companion was, I believe, hurt at this neglect; for ſhe was more out of temper than I ever ſaw her.—She hardly anſwered when I attempted to amuſe her; and once, that by chance I mentioned the name of Mr. Ewer,

in

in relation to our late diſpute, ſhe ſaid, rather peeviſhly, " that ſhe wiſhed him at York; and wondered what could have induced him to come here."

Tuesday 5.

I preſs Mr. Peterſon to haſten the improvements in my grove: he always ſays, yes; yet it goes on but ſlowly. I am impatient to ſurpriſe Harriet, with my improvements, on her return. What depends upon Mr. Ewer goes on better; for he has the commiſſion for Sailor's monument.—He is very diligent in his office; and has been three times to M. to give orders about the ſtone. He aſſures me that it is in great forwardneſs. He is as anxious as I can be to have it completed againſt Harriet's re-

turn, that ſhe may have the agreeable ſurpriſe of finding her favourite memorial, in verſe, of her own, among violets and primroſes, in a grove of evergreens, which will completely ſhelter it from the weather.

The ſpot fronts the ſouth, and is ſo warm, that Miſs P. has conſented to have ſome of her pots of myrtle placed in the ground there. A little bubbling ſpring riſes cloſe by, which, beſides keeping our plants freſh, will be of infinite ornament to our deſign. The ſpot, as you may ſuppoſe, is not immenſe; but we have contrived, by winding the walks round the trees, and each other, to have three diſtinct ones. One called *Les Souveries*, leads to Sailor's tomb; the ſecond, which is the moſt extenſive, winds round the firſt, and will terminate in a cloſe bower, chiefly of yew and laurel.

The

The ſpring already deſcribed forms here a ſmall rivulet, ſufficient to nouriſh a weeping willow, which I have cauſed to be planted on its bank—the only oak of the grove ſpreads its branches by. This retreat is peculiarly mine; and I have inſcribed it to Love and Edward.

The third walk, which is the gayeſt, is to conduct to an alcove, where there is to be a ruſtic ſeat well ſheltered. This I ſhall ornament with my beſt care. Here my favourite flowers—the woodbine, the jeſſamine and roſe, are to interweave their branches.

I call it Harriet's bower; and have dedicated it to Friendſhip.

Wednesday 6.

I ſee the Larimers every day; and not unfrequently meet Mr. Ewer at their houſe. He is as aſſiduous as ever to ſerve them; and keeps up a regular correſpondence with the friend whom I have already mentioned on that account.

His laſt letters adviſe, that ſince Mr. Larimer finds he can't get rid of his wife's claims upon him by the ſtory of her death, he has taken another method, and abſolutely diſowns his marriage with her.—The witneſſes of it being dead, it will be difficult for her to bring ſubſtantial proofs of it.

I found her drowned in tears, this morning, at this new inſtance of his villany; which

which pains her more on his account than her own.

"Ah! honey, my dear," ſaid ſhe, ſobbing, "I can bear want and miſery, but I cannot bear, that the father of my child, he whom I love beyond all the world, and would die to ſave, ſhould be a villain; and not content to ſtarve his family, would brand it with infamy." I could anſwer nothing but tears to theſe bitter reflections.

The ſource of poor Miſs Larimer's ſeems wholly dried up. She ſits ſpeechleſs and motionleſs, like Patience on a monument; but ſhe does not ſmile at grief. Mr. Ewer attending me home, I propoſed to him to help me in a little ſcheme of innocent deceit, for the relief of theſe unfortunate ladies, and to ſpare their feelings. He readily agreed; and I gave him a ten pound

pound note, which he is to produce to-morrow, either as coming from the worthleſs huſband, or as a further ſubſcription of her friends in London.

I ſpoke to him of my accidental rencounter of the lady at Briſtol: from my deſcription, he ſaid, it was clear that it was the very Mrs. Folwing, who was formerly Miſs Larimer's intimate friend. "I know not," ſaid he, "why it never occurred to me to apply to Folwing, who is a worthy fellow, in her behalf. I have long ceaſed all correſpondence with him, and my old friends.—However, upon ſuch an occaſion, certainly when they are again diſtreſt, I ſhall take the liberty of addreſſing myſelf there."

Thurſday

Thursday 7.

Poor Mrs. Larimer was conſoling herſelf yeſterday with the reflection, that out of evil comes good. "Yes," ſaid Mr. Ewer, "and out of good comes evil." We all attacked him on this aſſertion, and defied him to prove it. As near as I can recollect, theſe were his words :—

"I believe, ladies," ſaid he, "you all know me too well to accuſe me of irreligion, or any deſign of arraigning Providence, by hazarding an opinion that, at firſt ſight, may have that appearance: on the contrary, what I have to advance tends to prove the neceſſity of evil in this world as it is. You allow that it is productive of

of good; it is granted: for my oppoſite aſſertion, which, far from contradicting yours, only tends to confirm it, I appeal to your own experience.

"How often does it happen, that virtuous parents have worthleſs offspring—excellent maſters, bad ſervants—gentle wives, tyrannical huſbands, and indulgent huſbands, tempeſtuous wives! In the firſt inſtance, perſons who have all their lives been uniformly regular and virtuous, may be ignorant of many of the ſnares to which youth are expoſed; and of courſe not guarding properly againſt them, their own innocence may be fatal to that of their children. Their tenderneſs and gentleneſs, averſe to curb the paſſions and caprices of their young charge, yield when they ſhould reſiſt; and the patience and forbearance they practiſe ſo well, too eaſily excuſe the want of both in their children or pupils.

"It

" It is thus with the other relations of life which I have mentioned. I have known a very good temper ſpoiled by the over-yielding of another that happened to be of a ſtill better: the patience of the one, productive of impatience in the other: a courſe of generous proceedings in a diſintereſted obliger, augment ſelfiſhneſs in the obliged; unſuſpicious and uncorruptible integrity in the employer, occaſion diſhoneſty in the employed; and almoſt every virtue its oppoſite vice, not indeed of neceſſity and always, but much oftener than you, ladies, would eaſily believe. The evil ſo prevalent in our corrupted ſtate, balances the buſineſs, and, as you obſerve, produces good; for a paſſionate and captious parent and maſter, will probably render his children and dependants, gentle, patient, and enduring; a libertine father will probably have ſober children; his own fatal experience becomes their ſafeguard; for no perſons hold ſo tight a curb, as thoſe who have

have felt the inconvenience of having had too much head; none are ſo ſevere on the follies and extravagancies of youth, as thoſe who have ſpent their youth in follies and extravagancies, and none guard againſt them ſo well. Do not, however, ſuppoſe, ladies, that by this ſtrain of argument I mean to be the advocate of vice: on the contrary, I ſeek to juſtify the ways of God to man; and to prove that in this ſtate of imperfection and woe, however it may ſeem to our ſhort-ſightedneſs, "whatever is, is right."

Friday 8.

I am juſt returned from my grove, which I found improved as if by enchantment. The fairies muſt have helped Peter out with Harriet's bower; for he is one of thoſe who are ſlow and ſure.

It

It is covered over with neat lattice work, painted green; the ſeat is raiſed, the ground matted, and all the flowers of the ſeaſon are filling it with fragrance.

I ran to thank Mr. Peterſon for all this kind attention. He laughs, and looks ſly, as is his cuſtom; but made no anſwer to all my fine ſpeeches.

Saturday 9.

I have this moment received the following note from Harriet, dated Roſefield, April 8.

"How I long to ſee you! my ever dear friend! and how could I conſent to leave you! Our family are expected here to dinner to-morrow. I have the agreeable

commiſſion of inviting you to be of the party; and ſure you will not refuſe me.

"I anticipate the pleaſure—do not have the cruelty to diſappoint me: and take me back with you, if poſſible; for here I do not feel at home. I have nothing to intereſt or amuſe me; and if my couſin had not found me the employment of making baby things for her, I ſhould have been ſo at a loſs what to do with myſelf, that certainly my looks would not have improved here.

"I hope to hear better accounts of the Larimers; tell them I long to ſee them—and believe me ever,

My dear, dear Mrs. Willars,
Your gratefully affectionate,
HARRIET PETERSON."

P. S. I write to my couſin.

Wednesday

Wednesday 18.

I went with the family on Sunday, my dear Edward, to ſpend the day at Roſefield; and there I have been till now.—The weather proving wet in the evening, I was induced to ſtay. Mr. Bertram promiſed to bring me home the next day; but either could not or would not find an opportunity till now.

Harriet's joy at ſeeing us, reanimated her languid features. She was enchanted to do the honours, and ſhew me about the houſe and gardens, which are comfortable, convenient, and very agreeably ſituated.—Her countenance fell when ſhe found that her ſcheme of returning with us could not take place, as we were already ſo crowded; but when the rain came on, and it was

ſettled that I ſhould ſtay, ſhe cheared up, and was quite in high ſpirits.

Miſs Peterſon took my place in the chaiſe home, for ſhe had come on horſe-back; and was not to be prevailed upon by any intreaties of her mother or ſiſter to remain, although ſhe ran ſome riſk of being wet.

The next morning proving fair, Harriet led me through a cloſe lane to a very extenſive common.—"This," ſaid ſhe, "reminds me of our haunts at Southlands; and here I come, every day, to think on abſent friends: "on you," ſhe continued, colouring, "and the Larimers. How concerned I am to hear that their difficulties increaſe inſtead of diminiſhing. Oh, my dear Mrs. Willars! when there is ſo much of real miſery in the world, why do we make to ourſelves imaginary ones?"

"To

"To make the burthen equal, my dear," ſaid I, "that every one may have their ſhare, however diſproportioned the gifts of nature or of fortune." "Look yonder," ſaid ſhe; "I proteſt I never ſaw a human creature here before; and as if on purpoſe to illuſtrate your obſervation, there is a man carrying a heavy ſack."

"That is a phenomenon, to be ſure," ſaid I; "let us approach it." As we drew nearer, the man perceived us, and took off his hat. This unuſual civility—for civility is rather unuſual here—led us to notice him; and we both thought we recogniſed his countenance. Harriet firſt recollected the occaſion of our acquaintance —"As ſure as fate," ſaid ſhe, "it is the poor bridegroom we ſaw dragged to church: do let's inquire after his wife."

I felt rather embarraſſed how to put the queſtion, as it was highly probable that he had left her to her ill fate; but ſome-

thing intereſting in the man's look encouraging me, I aſked him if he did not recollect having ſeen us before? "Yes, an' pleaſe you, Madam," ſaid he, ſcratching his head, "you was at my wedding, Lord help us; I'm ſure I ſhall never forget you."

Well, my honeſt friend, and how does it turn out? better than you expected, I hope. You look like an honeſt fellow, and I ſhould be glad to hear that you were happy. "Why, as to happy," ſaid he, "I can't ſay much for that; there is a child, and times are hard.—I does as well as I can. I works here for farmer Mills, and we lives there hard by."

We gave each a ſmall preſent, and a great deal of praiſe.—We promiſed he ſhould never want a friend, while he continued to deſerve one; and took his direction to ſee his wife. The poor fellow thanked

thanked us with his eyes full of tears, and ſaid it ſhould not be his fault if matters did not go on well: "thof, to be ſure," ſaid he, "my caſe is a hard one. I had an honeſt induſtrious girl for a ſweet-heart, that I'm ſure I ſhould have been happy with: ſhe has left the country upon it; and I am tied for life.—Indeed 'tis deſperate hard, ladies."

"Hard indeed it is, poor fellow," ſaid Harriet, as we turned away. I perfectly agreed with her; and we ſtrolled on ſlowly, and ſomewhat reluctantly, towards the cottage, which we could now diſtantly deſcry. Arriving, we found the woman, with her child, juſt going out to fetch water. She recollected us, and ſeemed a little confuſed. We ſaid we were glad to ſee her comfortably ſettled, for the houſe ſeemed tolerable; and that we hoped her huſband was kind to her.—"Oh, very kind, indeed," ſaid ſhe; "he's a little mollon-

cholly,

cholly, to be ſure, but never gives me a bad word." We praiſed his conduct as it deſerved; and giving her money and good advice, left her blubbering; but ſhe failed to intereſt us ſo much as the man.

In the evening Mr. and Mrs. Bertram entertained us with a little matrimonial dialogue on the ſubject of a new dog, which the gentleman has got, and the lady does not approve.

This ended in ſomething very like a quarrel. Harriet tells me it is nothing new; but, ſaid ſhe, they make it up again. It ſeems that they are in the agonies of the ſtruggle, of who ſhall be maſter.

Tueſday afternoon two neighbouring families came to viſit Mrs. Bertram. One of them conſiſted of a mother and two daughters, of whom I ſhould ſay nothing, if their inhuman mockery of a poor object,

the only child of the other, had not excited our diſguſt. This unhappy young perſon is diſtorted by nature in every poſſible way. She is crooked, lame, and blear-eyed; in ſhort, in all reſpects, formed to excite pity rather than mirth.

The miſſes above-mentioned were too vulgar and narrow-minded to feel this truth, and were laughing at their unfortunate neighbour, the whole of the viſit, and that in ſo undiſguiſed a manner, I fear it could not eſcape her notice. Mrs. Bertram joined the laugh, and ſeemed to think her perſonal defects a very good joke:—While her huſband, after ſhe was gone, talked in his coarſe way, of the *lady* they had had to viſit them.

In the diſguſt this ſcene was calculated to excite, I drew comfort from the contraſt it afforded to the demeanour of Harriet; who, though the youngeſt of all preſent,

ſent, far from joining in ſuch unfeeling mirth, was tenderly aſſiduous, by the kindeſt and moſt delicate attentions, to conceal it, or at leaſt to atone for it to the arch Miſs Exton—ſo the other young perſon was called,—who is far from wanting ſenſe, appeared quite charmed with her new acquaintance, and very grateful for her aſſiduities.

Harriet would fain have accompanied us back to-day; but her fortnight was inſiſted upon; and her couſin ſeeming to think it unkind that ſhe ſhould wiſh to abridge the time of her firſt viſit, immediately prevailed: for ſhe had always much rather oppoſe her averſe feelings, than fail in attention to thoſe of others. She wetted my cheek with a tear, begged to be remembered to all friends—not forgetting Toby and Sappho.

END OF VOL. II.

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